

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick**

**Permanent WRAP URL:**

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/104924>

**Copyright and reuse:**

This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it.

Our policy information is available from the repository home page.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: [wrap@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:wrap@warwick.ac.uk)

# THE BRITISH LIBRARY

BRITISH THESIS SERVICE

## TITLE

THE USE OF THE PERFORMATIVE TO DISRUPT  
FORM IN THE WORK OF ARTISTS SINCE 1960

## AUTHOR

Timothy Edward John  
WHITE

## DEGREE

Ph.D

## AWARDING BODY

Warwick University

## DATE

1994

## THESIS NUMBER

DX184470

THIS THESIS HAS BEEN MICROFILMED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction. Some pages may have indistinct print, especially if the original papers were poorly produced or if awarding body sent an inferior copy. If pages are missing, please contact the awarding body which granted the degree.

Previously copyrighted materials (journals articles, published texts etc.) are not filmed.

This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognise that its copyright rests with its author and that no information derived from it may be published without the author's prior written consent.

Reproduction of this thesis, other than as permitted under the United Kingdom Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under specific agreement with the copyright holder, is prohibited.

21

The use of the performative to  
disrupt form in the work of artists  
since 1960

Timothy Edward John White

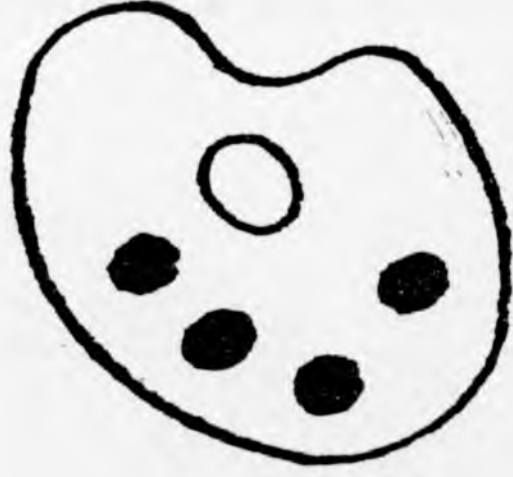
PhD Thesis

University of Warwick

Joint School of Theatre Studies

August 1994

# NUMEROUS ORIGINALS IN COLOUR





*To Liz*

## Table of Contents

List of tables and illustrated matter	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Photograph credits	vi
Abstract	vii
A note on sources	viii
 Introduction	 1
Form	2
The Performative work	17
I	21
II	25
III	31
IV	34
V	37
Conclusion	40
Introduction notes	43
 Chapter 1 - Robert Morris: Sculpture in the Footlights	 48
Obstacles in the gallery space	50
Too much to see and everthing to do	73
Conclusion	86
Chapter 1 notes	90
 Chapter 2 - Allan Kaprow: A role for everyone/everyone playing a role	 95
Expansion	95
Participation	107
Dispersal and reformation	117
Conclusion	129
Chapter 2 notes	133
 Chapter 3 - Joseph Beuys: Life as a pale imitation of Art	 136
Inventing the past	138
Just who was that man in the felt hat?	147
The contemporary shaman	155

The mortality of the object	164
Chapter 3 notes	173
Chapter 4 - Chris Burden: A difficult labour	178
The disappearing, disobedient object	179
The ties that bind	188
Representation as the site of doubt	200
Chapter 4 notes	214
Chapter 5 - Robert Wilson: Singular vision, diverse form	218
The theatre of images - watching paint dry and run	221
Speaking in tongues	234
Infinity divided by three	247
Conclusion	254
Chapter 5 notes	256
Conclusion	260
Appendix A - Robert Morris Interview	265
Appendix B - Robert Wilson Interview	280
Robert Morris bibliography	297
Allan Kaprow bibliography	302
Joseph Beuys bibliography	307
Chris Burden bibliography	312
Robert Wilson bibliography	317
General Bibliography	322

## List of tables and illustrated matter

### 1. diagrams, tables and scores

Fig.	description	page
1	Seating arrangement for <i>Untitled Event</i> , Black Mountain College, 1952	20
2	<i>Three Window Events</i> , George Brecht c.1961	30
3	extract from the score for <i>You: A Decollage Happening for Bob and Rhett Brown</i> , Wolf Vostell 1964	31
4	Four Fluxus events by Robert Watts	33
5	chart by Yvonne Rainer showing relationship between minimal sculpture and recent dancing, from "A Quasi Survey of Some "Minimalist" Tendencies in the Quantitatively Minimal Dance Activity Midst the Plethora, or an Analysis of <i>Trio A</i> "	51
6	<i>Three Aqueous Events</i> , George Brecht Summer 1961	113
7	excerpt from the score for <i>Self Service</i> , Allan Kaprow, 1967	120
8	<i>Lebenslauf/Werklauf (Life Course/Work Course)</i> Joseph Beuys, 1964	140-141
9	stage plan for <i>Deafman Glance Act 1</i>	229
10	backdrop for <i>A Letter for Queen Victoria</i>	246

### 2. photographic reproductions

plate	description	page
1	Jackson Pollock. <i>Lavender Mist</i> . Oil, enamel and aluminium paint on canvas. 86½" x 119"	7
2	Morris Louis. <i>Beta Theta</i> 1961 Acrylic on canvas 8' 7" x 14' 1/8"	7
3	Anthony Caro. <i>Early One Morning</i> 1962. Painted aluminium and steel, 114" x 244" x 131"	10
4	Robert Morris. <i>Slab</i> . (1962-68). Painted Wood, 11 5/8" x 95 3/4" x 95 3/4"	10
5	Marcel Duchamp <i>Fountain</i> 1917 Ready-made	18
6	Jasper Johns. <i>White Flag</i> . 1955. Encaustic and collage on canvas. 78½" x 120¼"	26
7	Robert Morris. <i>Untitled (Wedges)</i> . 1967. Grey fibreglass.	55
8	Robert Morris. <i>Untitled</i> 1965. Plexiglass mirror on wood, four pieces each 28x28x28"	59
9	Robert Morris. <i>Pine Portal</i> 1961 Wood, circa 96x48x12"	64
10	Robert Morris. <i>Untitled (L-Beams)</i> . 1965-67. Grey fibreglass	67
11	Robert Morris. <i>Untitled</i> 1968. Expanded aluminium, 36x144x144"	69
12	Robert Morris. <i>Untitled</i> 1968. Grey felt, two pieces each ½" thick	75
13	Robert Morris. <i>Untitled</i> 1968 Grey felt, ½ x 72 x 108"	77

14	Robert Morris. <i>Earthwork</i> . 1968 Earth, grease, peat, steel, copper, aluminium, brass, zinc, felt, approximately 24x60x84"	79
15	Joseph Beuys. <i>The End of the Twentieth Century</i> . 1983-85. 31 basalt stones with clay filled cavity and cone shaped insert wrapped in felt. Overall size variable	79
16	Robert Morris. <i>Continuous Project Altered Daily</i> 1969 Earth, water, paper, grease, plastic wood. (state 2)	80
17	Robert Morris. <i>Continuous Project Altered Daily</i> 1969 Earth, water, paper, grease, plastic wood. (state 5)	80
18	Robert Rauschenberg. <i>Mongram</i> . 1955-9 Freestanding Combine 42x64x64½"	82
19	Robert Morris. <i>Site</i> Dance piece 1965	84
20	Robert Rauschenberg <i>Bed</i> 1955 Combine painting 74" x 3'	99
21	Allan Kaprow. <i>Kiosk</i> . 1957-59. Rearrangeable panels (Assemblage)	102
22	Allan Kaprow. <i>Words Environment</i> . Smolin Gallery, New York September 11-22, 1962	104
23	George Brecht. <i>Blair</i> . 1959. 5'x1½'x2". Rearrangeable Assemblage.	105
24	Rehearsal for <i>18 Happenings in 6 Parts</i> .	108
25	Joseph Beuys. <i>QGG Land Procedures Crossed Four Times</i> 1941/63. Pencil, pen and ink, and oil ( <i>Braunkreuz</i> ) on paper. 8 ¼ x 11 ½"	146
26	Joseph Beuys. <i>How to explain pictures to a dead hare</i> . (performance) Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf, 26 November 1965	149
27	Joseph Beuys. <i>I like America and America Likes Me</i> (also known as <i>Coyote</i> ) (Performance, René Block Gallery, New York, May 1974)	158
28	Joseph Beuys. <i>Iphigenie/Titus Andronicus</i> Experimenta 3 Theatre Festival, Frankfurt, May 1969.	158
29	Joseph Beuys. <i>Fat chair</i> . 1964 90 x 30 x 30 cm Wooden chair with fat	162
30	Chris Burden. <i>Deadman</i> (Photograph, 1972)	200
31	Chris Burden. <i>Trans-fixed</i> (Performance/documentation, April 23, 1974, Venice, California)	205
32	Prologue to <i>Deafman Glance</i>	221
33	Act I <i>Deafman Glance</i>	230
34	Act I Section 4, <i>A Letter for Queen Victoria</i>	240
35	Cindy Lubar, Act 1 <i>A Letter for Queen Victoria</i>	245
36	Act I Scene 1a <i>Einstein on the Beach</i>	250
37	Act II Scene 3a, <i>Einstein on the Beach</i>	253

### Acknowledgements

The knowledge and encouragement of my supervisor, Dr Nick Kaye has been of inestimable value. Thanks must also go to Kate Brennan and the Joint School of Theatre Studies, University of Warwick. The British Academy have been of great financial assistance, both in paying my fees and contributing to the cost of a visit to New York to gather material. Of the many institutions and individuals who were generous with their time and information, special thanks should go to the Leo Castelli Gallery, Seth Goldstein at the Byrd Hoffman Foundation, the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, Franklin Furnace, the Museum of Modern Art Archives, the Alley Theatre, Houston, the ICA, London, and the New York Library for the Performing Arts. I am grateful to both Robert Morris and Robert Wilson for bearing the brunt of an emergent interview technique. Lastly, to the friends and family who have held the hand that held the pen, especially Liz and Mum and Dad.

Photograph Credits (by plate)

Steve Balkin, photographer, courtesy of Leo Castelli Gallery 16,17  
Martin Bough, photographer, 32,33  
Rudolph Burkhardt, photographer, courtesy of Leo Castelli Gallery 14  
Chris Burden 30,31  
Leo Castelli Gallery 6,7,9,11,12,13,20  
Beatrice Heyligers, photographer, 34,35  
Scott Hyde, photographer, 23,24  
ICA 29  
Ute Klopheus, photographer, 26  
Robert R McElroy, photographer, 21,22  
Babette Mangolte, photographer, 36,37  
J Mathews, photographer, 4  
Peter Moore, photographer, 19  
Robert Morris 8,10  
National Gallery of Art, Washington 1  
Nol Roozeboom, photographer, 25  
Spadem 18  
Tate Gallery, London 3,15  
C.Tisdall 27  
A.Tullman, photographer, 28  
M.Varon, photographer, 2  
Unknown 5

## Abstract

I intend to examine the work of five practitioners who, in embracing the possibilities arising from a disruption of form, operate on the cusp between the modern and the postmodern. They generate work that must be understood, and can most usefully be experienced, as performative. The unitary form and anti form objects of sculptor Robert Morris are considered as differing ways of projecting objecthood, provoking the beholder to address the total situation of the art work, including their participation, rather than the formal properties of the object. Allan Kaprow's progression from Assemblage through Environments to Happenings and beyond is regarded as an evolving process in which an antagonistic attitude toward the limitations of form is tempered by the emergence of performative circumstances that obviate the need to continually challenge the role of the object. The third section passes through the complex phenomenon of Joseph Beuys, identifying a practice that is performative, both because and in spite of the tension between the conception of art advocated by the artist and that within which he operates. Performance, in the interventions of Body Artist Chris Burden, is that which simultaneously allows for, being the justification for his presence amidst that of another individual, and *is*, the disruption of the normalising tendency of form. Finally, the 'operas' of Robert Wilson suggest ways in which work that is overtly theatrical in form can avail itself of the disruptive tendencies arising from fine art's adoption of a theatrical sensibility. In conclusion, it is argued that the performative work is inevitably formally diverse because its form arises from the encounter between the beholder and the provocations of the artist, rather than being lodged within an immutable object.



#### A note on sources

Access to the material considered in the body of the work has been at varying degrees of remove. Though a number of Robert Morris' works are no longer in existence, those that persist are regularly exhibited. Robert Morris granted me an interview that, in conjunction with the archives held at the Museum of Modern Art and at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York, formed the starting point for the first chapter of this thesis. Allan Kaprow's extensive writings around his work, along with the numerous scores and notes, both published and held in various archives, enabled an engagement with practices that are unashamedly transient.

A significant body of material concerning the various practices of Joseph Beuys, coupled with seeing his object work in numerous galleries in both Europe and America, has contributed to the argument advanced in chapter three, whilst the often provocative interventions of Chris Burden have been accessed at the remove the artist intended, frequently inviting an engagement with the point of reception as constituting the work. Lastly, an understanding of Robert Wilson's work was augmented by interviewing the director, attending two of his more recent productions (*Danton's Death*, Houston, 1992 and *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*, Edinburgh, 1993), accessing the extensive archive of his scores, working notes and other material at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University and by referring to video recordings of the three productions discussed in the final chapter.

## Introduction

---

The following remarks seek to evince an understanding of the term 'form', specifically as it is employed in the context of Modernist criticism to encapsulate an art practice. It will be argued that adherence to form by 'modernist' artists and critics as the site of artistic enquiry has prompted certain practitioners to evolve ways of working that neither speak only of, nor define themselves solely through opposition to, the particular characteristics of established disciplines. Instead, they seek to discover ways of working not circumscribed by pre-existing notions of what constitutes art. Regarded as operating on the cusp between the modern and the postmodern, the work of Robert Morris, Allan Kaprow, Joseph Beuys, Chris Burden and Robert Wilson suggests ways in which the Modernist paradigm, predicated on transgression and a break with the past, might itself be transgressed without the resultant work becoming a further manifestation of the Modern.

In evading the establishment of a new orthodoxy, these five artists generate work that admits of its contingency upon the moment of encounter with the beholder: as such, its nature can neither be adequately predicted nor reliably represented. Thus, the shift addressed in this study is concerned not with a redefinition of what might constitute the art object, but with the recognition that this art object might not be synonymous with the *art work*. As to what constitutes the work, the artists addressed in the following chapters set up differing circumstances whereby this may be discovered. In doing so, and in acknowledging the futility of pursuing the goal of formlessness, the five artists who are the subject of this study suggest ways in which form might be disrupted, an endeavour, it is argued, that is necessarily *performative*.

The Modernist conception of form as it relates to the art object is quite distinct from the less specific, more commonly held understanding of the term. In a general sense, form is a constituent element in the totality of an entity, evident in the following definitions; "1) the shape and structure of something as distinguished from its material.. 2) the essential nature of a thing as distinguished from the matter in which it is embodied"<sup>1</sup>. It is apparent that though the definitions given here diverge, favouring optical and ontological means of discernment respectively, they situate themselves in opposition to tangible qualities, be they material or matter. In an aesthetic sense, form, prior to its elevation under Modernism, was regarded as that which was perceivable, "conceived in opposition to content, the intelligible."<sup>2</sup> In an effort to establish a critical position that might address the move away from Realism in Post-Impressionist and early Cubist painting, the English critic Clive Bell issued a peremptory dismissal of content's claim to be a determining factor in what constitutes the work of art:

You will notice that people who cannot feel pure aesthetic emotions remember pictures by their subjects; whereas people who can, as often as not, have no idea what the subject of a picture is. They have never noticed the representative element, and so when they discuss pictures they talk about the shapes of forms and the relations and quantities of colours...They are concerned only with lines and colours, their relations and quantities and qualities,; but from these they win an emotion more profound and far more sublime than any that can be given by the description of facts and ideas...<sup>3</sup>

Rather than acknowledging the images and emotions that constitute a life outside of the picture frame, the painting, in Bell's understanding, consists of

lines and colours, combined in a particular way, certain forms and relations of forms [which] stir our aesthetic emotions. These relations and combinations of lines and colours, these aesthetically moving forms, I call 'Significant Form'; and 'Significant Form' is the one quality common to all works of visual art.<sup>4</sup>

The elevation of form in visual art was reflected in the approach of the Russian Formalists to literature, who, according to Tzvetan Todorov, conceived of form as "the totality of the work's various components"<sup>5</sup>. Rather than consider literature's merit to reside in its allusions or narrative, the Russian Formalists sought to address the qualities which distinguished it from other, non-literary forms. One of the prominent members of the group, Viktor Shklovsky, suggested that literature "creates a 'vision' of the object instead of serving as a means of knowing it".<sup>6</sup> This notion that form in art might refer only to itself is reflected in the writing of the post-war American critic Susanne Langer. She propounds an aesthetic that seeks to identify points of commonality in various disciplines' pursuit of form, even as such intentions demarcate more fully one art practice from another. In her *Feeling and Form* (1953) Langer develops earlier remarks concerning significance in music<sup>7</sup>, declaring her basic concept to be

the articulate but non-discursive form having import without conventional reference, and therefore presenting itself not as a symbol in the ordinary sense, but as a "significant form" in which the factor of significance is not discriminated, but is felt as a quality rather than recognised as a function.<sup>8</sup>

The avoidance of 'conventional reference' is a consequence of any appeals to the world of the beholder, be they representational or actual (such as the object's displacement in space), being subsumed by "the illusion enfolding the thing, action, statement, or flow of sound that constitutes the work"<sup>9</sup>. Thus, painting operates in 'virtual space', sculpture occupies a 'virtual kinetic volume', music creates an order of 'virtual time' and so on, for each of the various disciplines Langer acknowledges.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, she declares, "all art is abstract. Its very substance, quality without practical significance, is an abstraction from material existence".<sup>11</sup> The autonomy of such works extends to the way in which the beholder is affected by them; the "psychological lure to long contemplation" located not in a dialogue between object and beholder but in "the impact of the whole, the immediate revelation of vital import".<sup>12</sup> As such, the work is not a stimulus to the beholder, for to be so would admit a degree of dependency, but rather both sets out the sensation it wishes to convey and conveys this sensation simultaneously. It "clarifies and organises intuition itself" so that it "inspires a feeling of deep intellectual satisfaction, though it elicits no conscious intellectual work"<sup>13</sup>.

Langer's remarks, concerned to lay down fundamental principles equally applicable to art of the twelfth as of the twentieth century, avoid prescribing the direction that a contemporary art practice might or should take. Less reticent in this regard is Clement Greenberg, the most influential and pervasive proponent of Modernist criticism, who, whilst being in accord with Langer in relation to the centrality of form, wishes to situate it within a historical frame. His understanding of the centrality of form is predicated on the central Modernist tenets of transgression and a break with the past<sup>14</sup>. The point of schism for Greenberg is to be found in the paintings of Manet, "by virtue of the frankness with which they declared the surfaces on which they were painted"<sup>15</sup>. From this

point, Greenberg considers the task of the painter to be an acknowledgement, rather than an acceptance, of the particular nature of painting by stressing those qualities it shares with no other discipline:

It quickly emerged that the unique and proper area of competence of each art coincided with all that was unique to the nature of its medium. The task of self-criticism became to eliminate from the effects of each art any and every effect that might conceivably be borrowed from or by the medium of any other art. Thereby each art would be rendered "pure" and in its "purity" find the guarantee of its standards of quality as well as of its independence. "Purity" meant self-definition, and the enterprise of self-criticism in the arts became one of self-definition with a vengeance.<sup>16</sup>

Greenberg's self-defining quality might be imposed upon work as distinct as that of Piet Mondrian, the lines and rectangles of whose paintings echo the enclosing frame, the negotiation between pictorial structure and the physical frame, suggested by Barnett Newman and the eschewing of pictorial depth for that of the pigment in the work of Jackson Pollock (see plate 1). Greenberg's formulation is most evident in the work of two of his contemporaries, Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland, whose style he termed 'Post-Painterly Abstraction'. The extent to which form and the totality of the art work can be read as indivisible in the paintings of Louis and Noland is apparent in Greenberg's 1960 essay, "Louis and Noland" :

Louis spills his paint on unsized and unprimed cotton duck canvas, leaving the pigment almost everywhere thin enough, no matter how many different veils of it are superimposed, for the eye to sense the threadedness and wovenness of the fabric underneath. But 'underneath' is the wrong word. The fabric, being soaked in paint rather than

merely covered by it, becomes paint in itself, colour in itself, like dyed cloth; the threadedness and wovenness are in the colour.<sup>17</sup>

Louis' *Beta Theta*<sup>18</sup> (see plate 2) is abstract, yet without ambiguity, distanced from the intentionality of the artist through a technique of pleating the canvas and allowing paint to run its course through the channels thus created. Its uncompromising reliance on the optically discernible quality of colour is considerably more austere than Langer's organic sense of form, "living form", in which "similar or congruent elements 'repeat' each other, colours 'balance' each other".<sup>19</sup> Lacking reference to the world beyond the frame, even indirectly, such work denies a point of entry to the beholder who simply attends its perpetual moment of immanence.

In establishing form as the sole determinant of the art work, Greenberg's critical position was unable to embrace an emerging practice which manifested itself in efforts to posit form as malleable, contingent and even dispensable. This practice marked a break with Modernism in its reluctance to bring forth new forms, which might then be subject to the same essentialist impulse as was evident in Greenberg's pursuit of 'purity'. Such a shift is predicated as much on altering the terms in which the object is found as changes to what might constitute the object. This is apparent in a consideration of the work of Jackson Pollock, cited both by Greenberg as an exemplar of Modernist sensibility<sup>20</sup> and by various artists as prefiguring a reconsideration of the place of the object in the art work.<sup>21</sup>

Jackson Pollock's "action-paintings", such as *Lavender Mist*<sup>22</sup> were created by placing the canvas on the floor and applying paint and other materials by dripping, smearing and throwing rather than with a brush, so that "the flung pigment filled the whole surface with its web, leaving

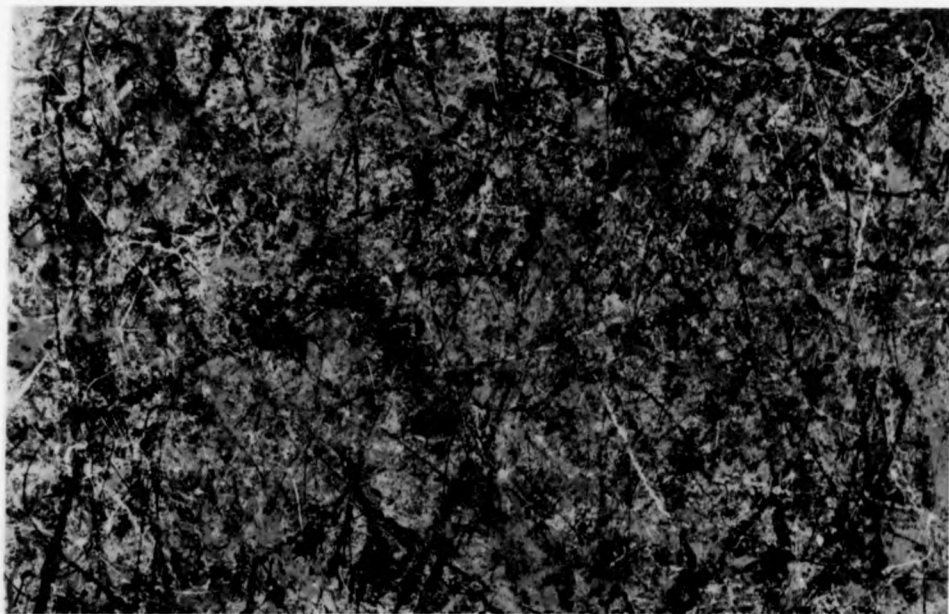


Plate 1. Jackson Pollock. *Lavender Mist*. Oil, enamel and aluminium paint on canvas. 86½" x 119"



Plate 2. Morris Louis. *Beta Theta* 1961 Acrylic on canvas 8' 7" x 14' 1/8"



no "holes" or figure-ground contrasts".<sup>23</sup> A reading of the work sympathetic to Greenberg's position would suggest that the artist eschews pictorial depth in favour of a real depth (though contained within the work and attesting to its own reality rather than one outside it) arising from layer upon layer of paint on the surface. One contrasting means of approaching Pollock's work is by attending to its physical attributes as indicative of its status as object rather than affirming its form as that of a painting. In his study of American art theory, Stewart Buettner suggests such a reading could be attributed to Allan Kaprow and Claes Oldenburg, looking toward "an experimental continuum incorporating both object and viewer...dissolving the barriers that had previously separated the two".<sup>24</sup> Close inspection of a Pollock canvas reveals surface incidents, not only ridges and troughs of randomly applied paint, but other detritus that accumulated on the studio floor where the canvas was painted. The tactility and texture of the canvas is of a different perceptual order to the optical qualities it exhibits from a viewing position sufficiently distant to take in the whole of the work. At once, the possibility emerges that the beholder's orientation might have a bearing on the nature of the work. In place of an optimum, frontal viewing position, several possibilities present themselves to the beholder, whose actions have a bearing on how the object is regarded.

The profound effect of considering the beholder's relationship to the object within the context of the art work prompted the critic Michael Fried to issue a vehement defence of the Modernist position. His seminal essay, *Art and Objecthood* (1967)<sup>25</sup>, attacks the works and writings of two proponents of Minimal Art, Robert Morris and Donald Judd, for 'theatricalising' this relationship. Fried defends the sculpture of Anthony Caro (see plate 3) against the 'literalist'<sup>26</sup> aesthetic he finds in Minimal Art, suggesting that Caro's work operates through the internal

cohesiveness of individual elements rather than the irreducible presence of the whole:

A characteristic sculpture by Caro consists, I want to say, in the mutual and naked *juxtaposition* of the I-beams, girders, cylinders, lengths of piping, sheet metal, and grill that it comprises rather than in the compound *object* that they compose. The mutual inflection of one element by another, rather than the identity of each, is what is crucial...<sup>27</sup>

The dearth of internal relationships in Robert Morris' *Slab*<sup>28</sup> (1962-68) (plate 4) marks a conscious decision by the artist to address "the simpler forms that create strong gestalt sensations"<sup>29</sup>. The polyhedrons that Morris employs evince a gestalt - "a functional unit with properties not derivable from the sum of its parts"<sup>30</sup> - that invites the beholder to look beyond the object in order to ascertain its identity. The implications of such a shift are succinctly stated by Robert Morris:

The better new work takes relationships out of the work and makes them a function of space, light, and the viewer's field of vision. The object is but one of the terms in the newer aesthetic. It is in some way more reflexive because one's awareness of oneself existing in the same space as the work is stronger than in previous work, with its many internal relationships.<sup>31</sup>

Here, it is the importance accorded to the specific circumstances of the beholder's encounter with the object and the undermining of the object's status as the sole referent of the art work that prompts Fried to declare that 'literalist' work is theatrical. It is, he argues, the experience of "an object *in a situation* - one that, virtually by definition, *includes the beholder*"<sup>32</sup>. Not only does the work exceed the spatial laws that obtain within the limits of the object, spilling out to include the location in which



Plate 3. Anthony Caro. *Early One Morning* 1962. Painted aluminium and steel, 114" x 244" x 131"

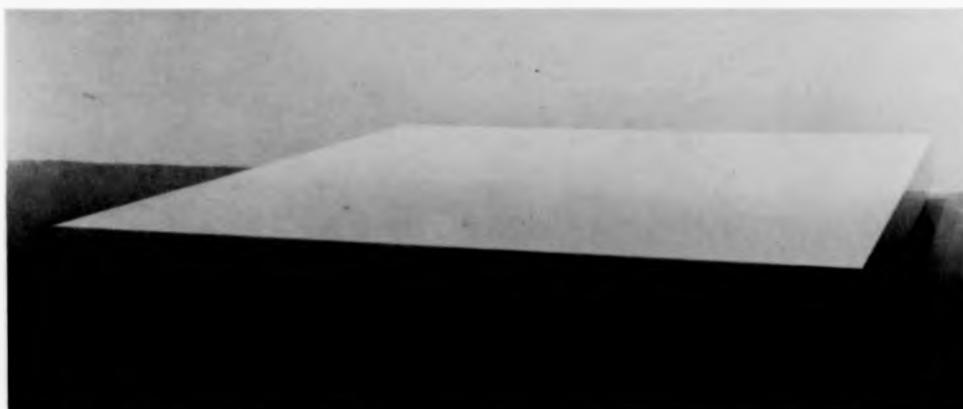


Plate 4. Robert Morris. *Slab* (1962-68) Painted Wood, 11 5/8" x 95 3/4" x 95 3/4"

it is to be found, but the inclusion of the beholder situates the work in time. Where the autonomous object persists without regard for the attentions of the beholder, Fried characterises the 'literalist' object as possessing a degree of expectancy, sated only by the appearance of the beholder, which signals the commencement of the work:

literalist work depends on the beholder, is incomplete without him, it has been waiting for him. And once he is in the room the work refuses, obstinately, to let him alone - which is to say, it refuses to stop confronting him, distancing him, isolating him.<sup>33</sup>

This differs from the passage of time before the Modernist art work, Fried argues, because "*at every moment the work itself is wholly manifest*".<sup>34</sup> The beholder is held by what Langer refers to as "the illusion enfolding the thing", such that duration is reconceived within the terms of the object rather than being comparable to that experienced in the world of the beholder. This distinction is even more apparent when applied to what Langer terms the "occurent" arts<sup>35</sup>, such as music and theatre, that are necessarily durational. Langer suggests that they command time in a manner analogous to the plastic arts' command of space. As the realm of virtual time, music, in Langer's formulation,

spreads out time for our direct and complete apprehension, by letting our hearing monopolise it - organise, fill, and shape it, all alone. It creates an image of time measured by the motion of forms that seem to give it substance, yet a substance that consists entirely of sound, so it is transitoriness itself. Music makes time audible, and its form and continuity sensible.<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, the drama subsumes time within a virtual future, such that, Langer argues, "it is only a present filled with its own future that is really

dramatic"<sup>37</sup>. In both instances, form, rather than being disrupted by time, orders it, giving it visibility as a discernible totality.

Without the object being able to command the time in which it is regarded, the duration before the object is determined by the beholder. This change is not a partial slippage from the object's position of autonomy, but an unequivocal acknowledgement of its contingency upon the beholder. The work as immutable object in which resides a stable meaning indissolubly linked to its physical properties is replaced by a conception of the work as a situation involving object, beholder and the circumstances in which they meet. Though the pretext for such an encounter may frequently be no different from that causing the beholder to bear witness to the self-sufficiency of the modernist art object, the moment of encounter with Fried's 'literalist' object is an *engagement* arising from such circumstances rather than an acknowledgement of their universality. Through various strategies, the beholder's expectations of what might constitute the object, how, why, and within what circumstances she might relate to it, are called into question, or disrupted, during the encounter with the object. As a consequence, the beholder is prompted to reappraise the terms by which she might acknowledge the object, no longer a thing held up for contemplation, but necessitating the active involvement of the beholder. If the work cannot be contained within the object, then this activity must be considered a constituent element. The work, then, is not simply perceived, being an external, discrete object, but is experienced, as a situation, the nature of which experience is to a greater or lesser extent determined by the choices of the beholder. Fried acknowledges this quality, considering the meeting of object and beholder to be 'theatrical', the gallery serving as a stage for the playing out of the encounter. This 'theatrical' work is viewed by Fried in relation to that which he believes it opposes, namely a modernist sensibility which segregates the different arts. Morris' work

is not deemed to *be* theatre by Fried, for if he were to assign it such a description it would be unlikely to warrant the attention of him in his role as a critic of fine art: instead, it "approaches the condition of theatre"<sup>38</sup> or could be construed as "a new genre of theatre"<sup>39</sup>. Yet rather than ascribe the term 'theatre' to work that situates itself between conventional forms one might more usefully refer to it as *performative*, in order to stress the action or process that *occurs* rather than any frame which might subsequently be imposed upon it.

The sculpture of Robert Morris, Allan Kaprow's various challenges to perceived limitations of form, Joseph Beuys' social sculpture, Chris Burden's questioning of the self in the world and the 'operas' of Robert Wilson are all interventions concerned to stress that there is an irreconcilable difference between the encounter with the object and any attempt to refer to the work beyond the limits of such an encounter. One might differentiate the work of these artists through recourse to the circumstances in which they occur (be it a gallery, a theatre or a 'found' space), the tradition from which they emerge (be it painting, sculpture, theatre or performance) or, retrospectively, extrapolate from the encounter characteristics that invite consideration of the work in the terms of one discipline rather than another. However, because of the 'performative' nature of these works, they are resistant to schema that would seek to place them within existing categories. It is a difference that Jean-François Lyotard recognises in his concept of the *event*, a singular occurrence that cannot be represented without loss of its defining singularity: "in sum, there are events: something happens which is not tautological with what has happened"<sup>40</sup>. Though, for Lyotard, both the 'modern' and the 'postmodern' are concerned to speak of that which resists representation, and which he refers to as 'the unrepresentable' or 'the sublime'<sup>41</sup>, he argues it is the 'event' that enables

approach such an articulation unencumbered by the limitations of form. The modern, in Lyotard's understanding, is that which

allows the unrepresentable to be put forward only as the missing contents; but the form, because of its recognisable consistency, continues to offer to the reader or viewer matter for solace and pleasure.<sup>42</sup>

The 'missing contents' are quite 'apparent' in the work of the Post-Painterly Abstractionists, as is the adherence to characteristics that invite the beholder to consider the work in the context of painting. The postmodern artist, contrastingly, in Lyotard's terms, is not content to allude to the unrepresentable but, in the modern

puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself; that which denies itself the solace of good forms, the consensus of a taste which would make it possible to share collectively the nostalgia for the unattainable; that which searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unrepresentable.<sup>43</sup>

Lyotard's placing of such activity "in the modern" is an important element in the work of the five artists considered here, who can be said to operate on the cusp between the modern and the postmodern. In disrupting form, they are concerned less with the establishment of new, less prescriptive forms, but with the creation of a time and space in which form may be subjected to interrogation. Fried's declaration that "the literalists have largely avoided the issue of value or quality at the same time that they have shown considerable uncertainty as to whether or not what they are making is art"<sup>44</sup> is pejorative within a modernist paradigm, yet signals the emancipation from predetermined criteria and ways of working that is imperative if the artist is to voice concerns that are suppressed by the adherence to form.

In recognising the situation that constitutes the art work, the artist considers the constituent elements of beholder, space, artist and object material that they might legitimately explore on a local and immediate basis without recourse to external criteria. Severed from an organising principle that determines the role of artist, object, beholder and the environment, an understanding of these terms arises from engaging in, or *performing* the work rather than functioning as the frame within which the object may evince its autonomy. Because these roles are culturally and historically determined, it is not sufficient that the artist declare that they have been reconceived; such a declaration would fail to challenge the right of the artist to claim authority, make transparent the medium she employs, and reconfirm the beholder as passive consumer. Instead, the elements within the work are the pretext for the work itself, which cannot be known at the time of its occurrence, a characteristic that Lyotard ascribes to the postmodern artist and writer, who

are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of *what will have been done*. Hence the fact that the work and text have the characters of an *event*; hence also, they always come too late for their author, or, what amounts to the same thing, their being put into work, their realisation (*mise en oeuvre*) always begin too soon.<sup>45</sup>

In response to the need to evade the limitations of form, various strategies emerged from the early 1960s onwards that undermined a fixed orientation of the terms that constituted the art work. In his lucid explication of critical theories, M.H.Abrams suggests that paradigmatic shifts are a consequence of the reorientation of these terms<sup>46</sup>. Where, according to Abrams, Romanticism exemplifies an expressive theory of art which privileges the feelings and operations of the artist, Modernism can be seen as according importance to the object (hence Abrams' term 'objective theory') to the detriment of the other terms. Abrams identifies



these terms as the 'universe' or that which obtains beyond the confines of the work, the artist, the audience and the object. The various practices of Robert Morris, Allan Kaprow, Joseph Beuys, Chris Burden and Robert Wilson do not suggest a further realignment of the four elements but rather seek to challenge the assumptions upon which they rest. A variety of practices since 1960 were able to boast a continuing formal diversity because, in part, they displayed an ambivalence toward the mutual exclusivity of the elements that constituted the art work and, consequently, their usefulness, given that the work, being performed, set out to forge relationships, not be constrained by them. In considering the performative work, various sites of disruption are identified, though a consequence of addressing work resistant to form is the difficulty in applying useful distinctions to isolate one practice from another.

From within a modernist paradigm, Fried considers this 'performative' work as antithetical to what he considers the proper concerns of art. Yet Fried's evocation of 'theatre' is distinct from that applied to the discrete discipline of the same name predicated on the qualities of a self-sufficient object placed before the beholder. The difference becomes increasingly apparent as artists develop ways of working that are characterised less by avoiding or circumventing the limitations of a particular form, but, touching on practices that at times explicitly declare a relationship to the performing arts, are no more bound to their limitations than to those of the plastic arts. Their strategies are disruptive, and, for this disruption to evade consideration as content, must be effected upon their very form, putting forward the unrepresentable "in presentation itself". This requires a rejection of the relationships that constitute the art work in favour of a situation that will allow these relationships to be forged, to be *performed*.

## The performative work

---

Whilst it is not possible to identify a single event or moment that marked the emergence of the performative work, a number of practices came to prominence around 1960 that signalled points of departure from the conception of the object as autonomous. The two most influential figures in provoking this paradigmatic shift were the artist Marcel Duchamp and John Cage. Duchamp had produced a body of work in the period 1911-1923<sup>47</sup> that had prefigured notions of chance, indeterminacy and objecthood clearly evident in a multitude of practices from around 1960 onwards. Perhaps the most challenging of Duchamp's interventions were the Readymades, utilitarian objects that the artist acquired and placed in the gallery space, such as a urinal (*Fountain*<sup>48</sup>) (plate 5) and a bottle drying rack (*Bottlerack*<sup>49</sup>). His signature on *Fountain*, under the pseudonym R.Mutt, reaffirms that the beholder consider the object as art, even though it is the only discernible intervention by the artist. The Readymades questioned several assumptions about the nature of the art object (and, necessarily, the roles of artist and beholder) not least the notions of uniqueness and what Langer terms its "otherness" from reality<sup>50</sup>. Duchamp's art works were plucked from an obscurity arising from their unremarked-upon familiarity and placed in a situation where they might expect to be subjected to considerable attention. Rather than contemplate the internal relations of the work, the beholder is prompted to question why the object is in the space, how she might react to it and by what means she might judge its aesthetic merits. By placing his Readymades in the gallery, Marcel Duchamp had challenged the belief that the artist invest a considerable degree of technical ability and physical exertion into the production of the object, "relating notions of worth to a decision of the intellect and not to a facility or cleverness of

the hand"<sup>51</sup>. The persistence of the Readymades as physical entities tends to obscure that which Duchamp seeks to valorise, the originating *idea*, as he despairingly observes; "I threw the bottlerack and the urinal into their faces as a challenge and now they admire them for their aesthetic beauty"<sup>52</sup>.

A re-evaluation of Duchamp's work began with the publication of Robert Motherwell's influential book "The Dada Painters and Poets", published in New York in 1951. Two years later, Duchamp was asked to install the first major exhibition of Dada work in New York, which, in its division of the gallery space by plastic dividers and the recordings of Kurt Schwitters reading his poems throughout the exhibition looked toward an environmental approach to space.<sup>53</sup> Amongst the contributors to Motherwell's book was the American composer John Cage, who provided an essay on the music of Eric Satie. Cage had studied

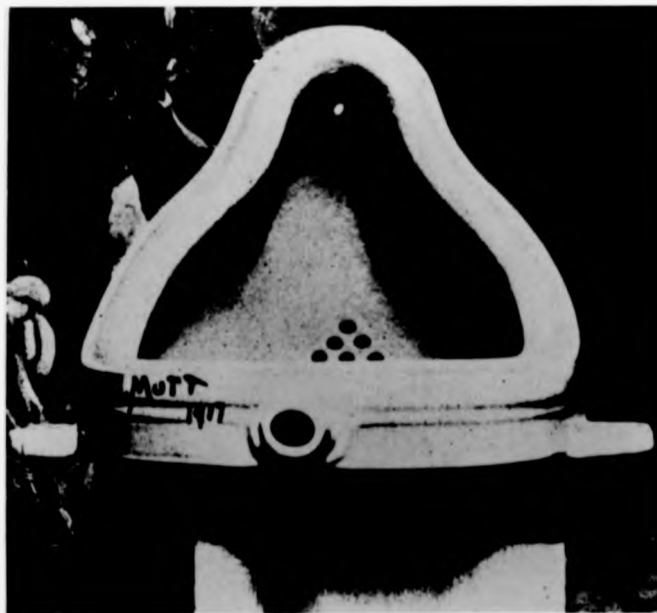


Plate 5. Marcel Duchamp *Fountain* 1917 Ready-made

composition in Europe and, subsequently, undertaken instruction in Zen Buddhism in the latter half of the 1940s. At the time of writing the essay on Satie, Cage had already worked for over a decade with the innovative dancer and choreographer Merce Cunningham, evolving pieces that had increasingly called upon chance techniques and indeterminacy. These qualities were apparent in a work performed at the summer school of Black Mountain College, North Carolina in 1952, subsequently referred to as *Untitled Event* (see fig.1). The unclassifiable nature of the piece is suggested in H.Sohm's chronology, "Happening and Fluxus" which refers to it as a "concerted action";

combining: painting, dance, films, slides, recordings, radios, poetry, piano, lecture/with audience in the middle/ a collaboration by john cage, merce cunningham, charles olsen, robert rauschenberg, m.c.richards, david tudor<sup>54</sup>

On the strength of the work's reputation, Cage's subsequent course on composing experimental music at New York's New School for Social Research between 1958 and 1959 attracted a number of artists, including Allan Kaprow, George Brecht, Dick Higgins and Jackson Mac Low, who would play a prominent part in the experimental work of the 1960s. The acquisitive nature of Cage's event foreshadowed the gathering of heterogenous elements in Assemblages and in its use of performers and an implicit sense of the beholder as participant, enclosed within the performance that permeated her space rather than positioned in front of it, looked toward the Happenings which emerged at the conclusion of the 1950s.

The first work to declare itself a Happening, Allan Kaprow's *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*, occurred in October 1959, utilising the services of artists such as Red Grooms and Dick Higgins who would later produce their own pieces. The hybrid quality of much of this work was evident in

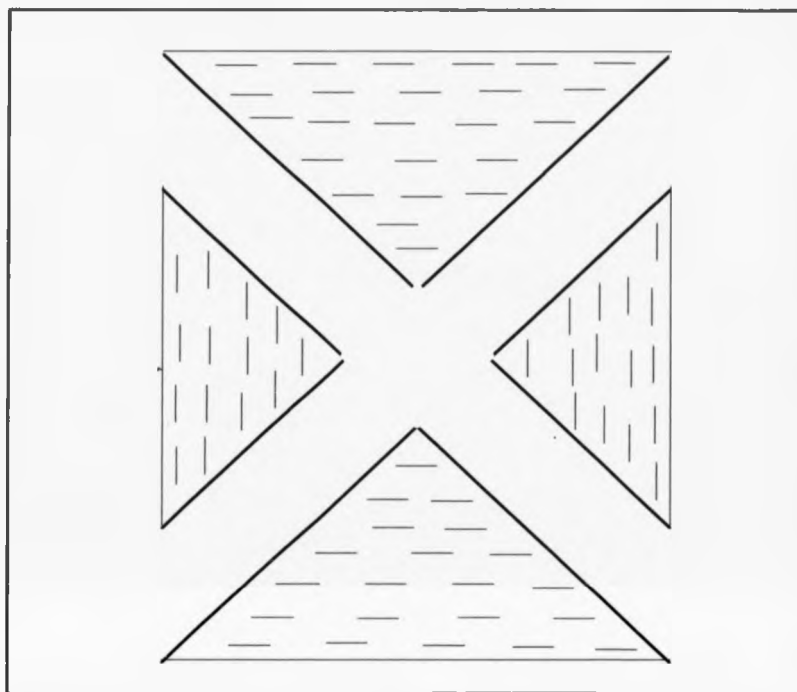


fig.1 Seating arrangement for *Untitled Event*, Black Mountain College, 1952

events referred to as New Music, Sound Theatre, aktions, manifestation collectives and de-coll/ages. Though it is possible to identify work resistant to easy classification in the interventions of the Japanese collectives the Gutai Group and Hi-Red-Center, and in the pieces produced by European artists such as Wolf Vostell, Yves Klien, Jean-Jacques Lebel and Piero Manzoni, rapid dissemination of ideas and working methods was concentrated in New York. In July 1962, the Judson Dance Theater, based in the Judson Memorial Church, Greenwich Village, gave the first of numerous dance concerts, featuring the work of practitioners such as Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton, Robert Dunn and Deborah Hay<sup>55</sup>. The venue became a focal point for the work of many interdisciplinary artists, amongst them Carolee Schneemann and Robert Morris. The collective title "Fluxus" was employed for the first

time in September 1962, its indeterminate nature apparent from the ever-burgeoning number and diversity of practitioners that took part in its activities<sup>56</sup>. The following year, a flurry of exhibitions advancing a body of work subsequently referred to as Minimal Art was initiated in January by a showing of new work at the Green Gallery, New York<sup>57</sup>.

The emergence of these departures at the beginning of the 1960s enhanced the climate of experimentation that was fostered in the mid-to-late 1950s. By the mid 1960s, new ways of working had appeared, including Body Art, Conceptual Art, Process Art and Earthworks, that were founded more on the implications of practices recently developed than the more well-established traditions such as painting and sculpture. The attitudes toward form considered below, coincide, by design, with the subsequent division of the thesis, and are intended not only to identify points of commonality that might characterise the performative work, but also, to situate the practices of Morris, Kaprow, Beuys, Burden and Wilson. The first two sections address the changing conceptions of sculpture and painting respectively and the third concerns the elevation of the artist. Sections four and five articulate attitudes arising from themes developed in the earlier sections; the establishment of self distinct from presentation of self in section four and the implosion of form in section five.

I

The Minimalist strategy of calling attention to the object *qua* object can be seen in the Readymades of the artist Marcel Duchamp. Minimal Art strove to foreground the material condition or "objecthood" of its objects, and thereby effect a concern with activity, particularly the interrogation of the object. This was not a return to the pre-Modernist form-content polarity, as the means of discerning "objecthood" could no

longer occur within the frame of the art object. By investing the internal relations of Duchamp's Readymades with significance, though they arose from functional design rather than artistic intent, the beholder might avoid consideration of their objecthood. Similarly, monochromatic painting, whether Rauschenberg's *White Painting* of 1951<sup>58</sup>, Yves Klein's uniform application of his own hue, International Klein Blue, to a number of canvases in the early 1960s<sup>59</sup>, Ad Reinhardt's all-over black paintings from 1960 or Frank Stella's *Black Paintings* shown at the Museum of Modern Art in 1959<sup>60</sup>, might be considered as autonomous works that were in possession of a stable meaning. Clement Greenberg, in his essay, "Recentness of Sculpture", rather than entertain the possibility of the beholder's shadow moving across the surface of Rauschenberg's white canvas as a constituent element of the work that was not contained within the object, suggests that, far from marking a radical departure, the painting was easy to "get".

In discussing the limited visual incident in Louis's *Beta Theta*, Greenberg argues that attempts to relate the work to the world in which it is situated are frustrated by its abstract quality, whilst any evidence of the artist's technical ability cannot be extrapolated from the painting but is an integral part of its nature. Expressive content, according to Greenberg, is replaced by expressive form such that "exact choices of colour, medium, size, shape, proportion" are evidence of the hand of the artist, who "if he uses his skill, it is to suppress the evidence of it"<sup>61</sup>. In utilising the third dimension, Minimalist sculpture, referred to variously as Primary Structures and Specific Objects amongst other terms, more closely aligns itself with the physical world than evincing the abstract, having to rely on external circumstances for its definition. By presenting an object that seems to deny any evidence of the artist's intervention, the Minimal artist displays no sense of imposing the condition of sculpture over its structure. Shape and colour, though unavoidable, are

rendered unprepossessing through the artists' adherence to simple geometric forms. These might be employed singly, as with Robert Morris' rectangular *Slab* (1962-68), or in multiples, as in the instance of Donald Judd's *Untitled*<sup>62</sup> (1969) consisting of ten steel and plexiglass boxes mounted on the wall in a vertical line. The 'neutrality' of the object was further strengthened by either painting the surfaces monochromatically or else allowing the natural hue of the material to determine the colour of the object, as in the chessboard appearance of Carl Andre's floor piece *Steel-Magnesium Plain*<sup>63</sup> (1969), consisting of thirty six squares of 3/8" thick plates of the two metals.

It is left to the beholder to ascertain the nature and significance of the Minimal object, and by extension, that of herself as beholder. Much of the work is concerned with the sense of presence arising from the tension between the strong conceptual sense of form, the idea of the cube or triangle, for instance, and the undeniable physicality of the object. Minimal Art does not escape form, (indeed, the object seems to be as close to clearly enunciated form as is possible), but instead disrupts its primacy by revealing it to be insufficient, having to admit a dependency on the circumstances in which it is found.

Simultaneously dependent upon, and disruptive of, the formal circumstances in which the art object is displayed in the gallery, Minimal sculpture exemplifies the relationship between discourse and figure elaborated by the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard. In his introduction to Lyotard's work<sup>64</sup>, Bill Readings outlines the example in *Discours, figure*<sup>65</sup> in which a mark on a page is comprehensible as a letter through the system of discourse that assigns certain significations to shapes. Distinguishing the mark from the page on which it is placed, rather than from other possible letters, one is presented with a line that is *seen* rather than a code that is *read*. The seemingly transparent



nature of the code is rendered opaque by the regarding of the letter as line.<sup>66</sup> This opacity is characteristic of the figural, which Readings defines as

...an unspeakable other necessarily *at work* within and against *discourse*, disrupting the rule of representation. It is not opposed to discourse but is the point at which the oppositions by which discourse works are opened to a radical heterogeneity or *singularity*.<sup>67</sup>

Though it is always present, the figural's dependence on an overlying system of discourse prevents its appearance in isolation. Instead, its presence can be acknowledged in a condition Readings refers to as 'blocking together',

in which two incommensurable elements (such as the visible and the textual) are held together, impossibly, in the 'same' space; a kind of superimposition without privilege.<sup>68</sup>

While the figural is always at work in any system of discourse, evidence of its existence is not necessarily apparent. With the example of the letter and the line, the beholder is required to disengage from reading the code so that they may discern the graphic line. The quantitative shift from reading to seeing is replicated in a response to the instantly discernible geometric shapes of Minimalist sculpture with one from seeing to experiencing. Though Minimal Art is usually considered to be characterised by the austere and simple forms produced by artists from around 1960 until the latter half of the decade, it is more properly an aesthetic rather than a body of work. This is apparent in the way that its ideas permeated the work of practitioners engaged in dance, music and theatre and also in its evolution from Primary Structures. In the late 1960s, the contingency of form was not left for the beholder to discover but constituted the impetus for works

that sought to evade it altogether. Where the Primary Structures revealed form to be vulnerable in its naked state, later work reacted against the notion of the well-made object by causing its appearance to be predicated on chance, as with Robert Morris' felt and scatter pieces, and subject to external forces, such as the deforming effect of gravity upon Claes Oldenburg's soft sculptures. As the object became "less self-important"<sup>69</sup>, ways of working evolved that were concerned less with the product than with the processes by which it emerged and was made known. The work accepted the exclusivity of artist and beholder, using the encounter with the object as the site where the terms of the relationship were performed.

## II

Whilst the concerns of Minimal Art could be discerned in painting as well as sculpture, the primarily visual nature of the canvas and its historical reliance on a frontal orientation tended to imbue the object with an abstract quality. By embracing the three-dimensionality and potential wealth of materials enjoyed by sculpture, artists around the time of the mid 1950s such as Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Allan Kaprow initiated a development distinct from Minimalism, not only because of the different point of origin, but through adding properties and materials to the form, rather than revealing those already present but suppressed. The expansion from the canvas to be found in the Assemblages and Combine-Paintings of Jim Dine, Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg and Allan Kaprow has been regarded as a development of Cubist collage. Pablo Picasso's *Still Life with Chair Caning*<sup>70</sup> (1912) consists of the artist's painted image and a printed one of chair caning glued to the canvas, juxtaposing the unique visual image with the mass-produced representation. While this posited the canvas as a site for considering questions of aesthetics, it was the physical protrusion from the flat surface of the painting, a quality evident in Jackson Pollock's

action-paintings, that was taken up by artists in the mid 1950s. The negotiation between the visual and tactile nature of the object is finely poised in the work of Jasper Johns. Johns' *White Flag*<sup>71</sup> (1955) (see plate 6), one of a number of his works that use the image of the Stars and Stripes on a fabric-covered plywood mount, "paints out" the colour with white encaustic. Its status as painting is qualified, as the opacity of

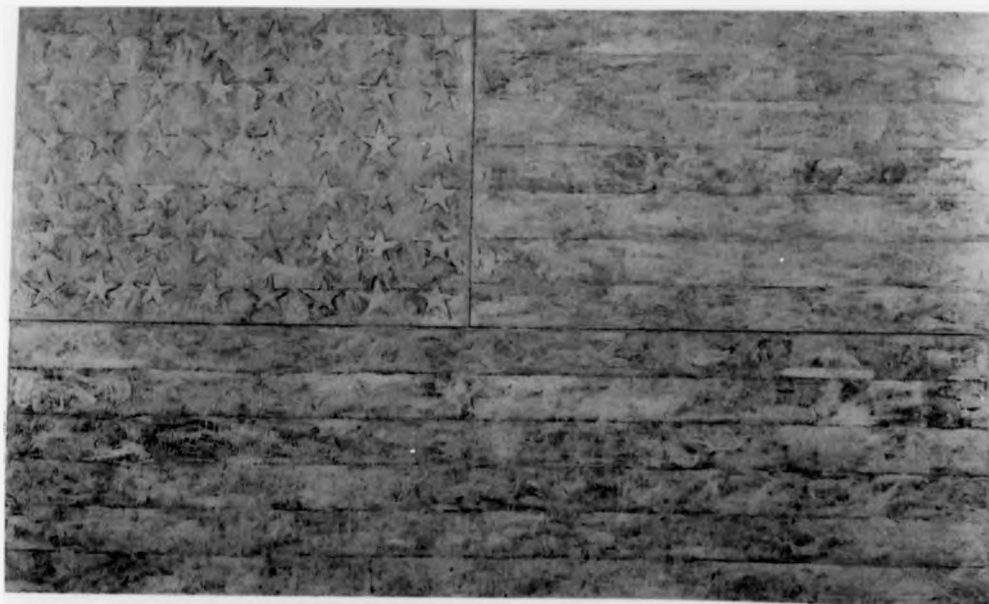


Plate 6. Jasper Johns. *White Flag*. 1955. Encaustic and collage on canvas. 78½" x 120¾"

the unevenly applied encaustic competes with the nascent sculptural extrusion of the pasted collage. More significant than this negotiation between forms, however, is the invitation to consider the physical qualities of the art object. As with the targets, letters and numbers Johns subsequently employed, the flag (outside of the gallery) is considered more as a visual than a physical phenomenon. Transferred to the canvas, the flag appears to have made no concessions to its ability to function as a flag. Attempts by the beholder to impose some distinction

between the flag on the wall and those outside of the gallery are predicated, paradoxically, on the physical qualities of the painting-as-object rather than its appeal to the eye. More overtly performative is John's *Tango*<sup>72</sup>, ostensibly a painting alluding to the Abstract Expressionist style but with a clockwork key protruding from the bottom right portion of the canvas. By turning the key, the beholder operated a mechanical musical box, a circumstance that Johns hoped might effect the relationship between object and beholder:

I wanted to suggest a physical relationship to the pictures that was active...In *Tango* to wind the key and hear the sound you had to stand relatively close to the painting, too close to see the outside shape of the picture.<sup>73</sup>

Even when the beholder was not impelled to move back and forth in front of the painting, they nevertheless were invited to ascertain what distance they were to place between themselves and the object on a conceptual level.

The matter attached to the canvas evolved from physically present visual matter such as the detail from Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* accompanied by various photographs suggesting flight in Robert Rauschenberg's *Rebus* (1955) to physical objects considered in a visual context, such as the key in John's *Tango*. That a discipline predicated on visual qualities might admit of a physical element was suggested in an analogous manner by John Cage's silent piece, *4' 33"*<sup>74</sup> (1952). Consisting of three movements, none of which contain any intentional sounds, the work expressed a wish that "music should be free of the feelings and ideas of the composer". Though referred to as 'the silent piece', Cage observes that this was a misunderstanding of the work:

You could hear the wind stirring outside during the first movement. During the second, raindrops began patterning the roof, and during the third the people themselves made all kind of interesting sounds as they talked or walked out.<sup>75</sup>

As the title suggests, the most fundamental requirement of music is duration. Cage had not only been assiduous in supplying an exact amount of time in which the work would occur but had called attention to the manner in which the non-intentional sounds that entered the work did not operate on a purely audible level but were associated with visual events. Likewise, *Assemblages* suggested that if the object might constitute anything within the beholder's field of vision, then this need not necessarily limit the choice of objects to those that could be understood within a purely visual context. As artists sought to incorporate ever more varied material their work was displayed on the floor, suspended and fixed in other orientations that best suited the work.

The freedom to work in a three-dimensional space encouraged artists to treat it as another material that might be manipulated, resulting in *Environments* that the beholder entered into, thereby surrounding her. Consequently, the physical object the artist provided became more difficult to isolate from the experience of the work. Artists willingly relinquished the permanence and autonomy of the object for the opportunity to construct temporary spaces that were concerned to engage the beholder on more than just a visual level. The more expansive *Environments*, such as Allan Kaprow's *Eat*<sup>76</sup>, which took place in caves outside New York, encouraged the beholder to taste, touch, smell, listen and look at the work. From their beginnings as specific places, *Environments* courted the attentions of the beholder in their midst to the extent that performers were often used to provide a greater degree of interaction than that afforded by unattended works,

transforming them into specific moments, particular in both time and space.

Typified by an acquisitive nature, the Environment evolved from an inclusive object to a performing space. Happenings, whilst sharing an ethos of experimentation and a rejection of prescribed form with Environments, were less a natural progression than a quantitative shift in the nature of the work. There is a considerable difference between the insentient material prepared in advance for the beholder to experience in Environments and an activity whose duration coincides with the presence of the beholder. This is not to decry performative work that insists on the physical object as somehow 'less performative' than that which employs live performers, but an acknowledgement that the evocation of a theatrical rather than a fine art frame necessitates different strategies if it is to be disrupted. Happenings unsettled the autonomy of the theatrical object by various means, not all of them common to every instance. Happenings might include any number of characteristics that broke with theatre practice - they might be performed only once; they might reject conventional theatre space in favour of multiple, disconnected spaces; they might use text as an element amidst a collage of other sounds rather than as a narrative device; they might avoid characterisation and the representation of another time and space in favour of an awareness of the present circumstances; they might reconceive the beholder as an active participant in the work.<sup>77</sup>

The imposition of the term 'Happenings' upon a body of work that might include the complex burial ritual carried out amidst the palazzos and canals of Venice in Jean-Jacques Lebel's *Funeral Ceremony of the Anti-Proces*<sup>78</sup> and also embrace the texts issued by George Brecht<sup>79</sup> that are ambiguous in status and intent (see fig. 2), indicates that their

homogeneity is not apparent in their form. Instead, it is the changed condition of the beholder that unites an otherwise disparate body of work. In those instances where a formal division between beholder and performer is adhered to, the work frequently comments on this divide, bisecting and traversing it in Cage's *Untitled Event* or inverting it in Claes Oldenburg's *Moviehouse*<sup>80</sup> (1965), presented in a cinema, in which the beholder observes an animated audience facing a blank (inactive) screen.



fig. 2 Three Window Events. George Brecht. c.1961

Because of the unfamiliarity of the circumstances, the beholder was often presented with instructions that would assist in their experiencing of the work. As Happenings developed into a mature practice these instructions began to rival in complexity those given to the performers to the extent that the distinction was at best arbitrary. Wolf Vostell's 'Instructions to the People' for his work *You*<sup>81</sup> extend beyond facilitating the movement of the audience to specific sites at set times, inviting a level of participation in the work indistinguishable from that of the performers (see fig. 3). The later Happenings sought to operate in the space created by the absence of the beholder. It will be seen that the beholder's assumption of responsibility in realising the

correspondingly diminishes the position of the artist conventionally understood as someone whose activity precedes the work's coming into being. An alternative strategy of the performative work, exemplified by Joseph Beuys, took the activity of the artist as the basis for its intervention, disrupting form by reconceiving the object within the artist rather than questioning the assumptions upon which particular disciplines operated.

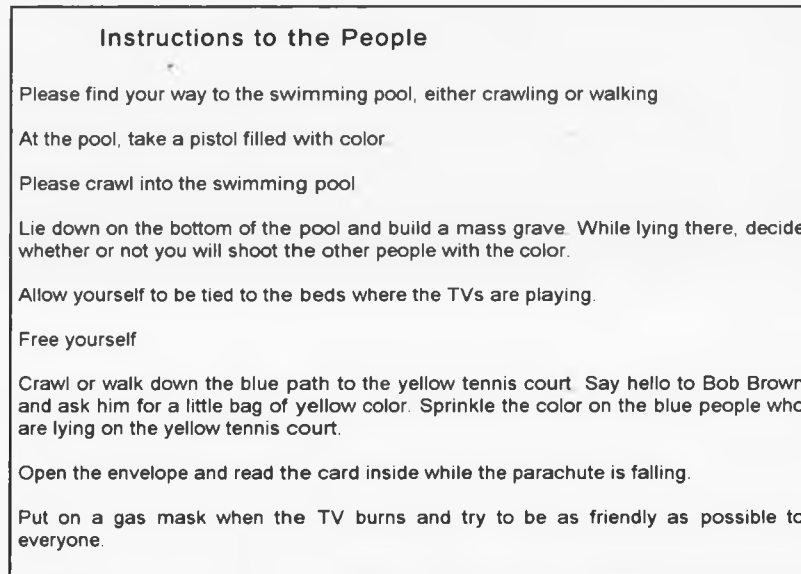


fig. 3 extract from the score for "You: A Décollage Happening for Bob and Rhett Brown". Wolf Vostell. 1964

III

Where both the concern with objecthood and the expansion of what might constitute the object retained at least a notional sense of the artist being distinct from the materials or circumstances she might provide, an area of work that again can trace its descent from Duchamp, elevates the status of the artist to the point where attention normally reserved for the object fixes instead on its instigator. Having



"decision of the intellect" above "cleverness of the hand", Duchamp did not always feel obliged to realise these decisions in objects that could be distinguished from the artist himself. Man Ray's photographs of Duchamp, both as his female alter-ego, Rose Sélavy, and displaying his star-shaved head<sup>82</sup>, attest to the way in which the artist courted attention by his presence alone. The persistent identification of Duchamp's actions as art extended to consideration of his withdrawal from the art world, from 1945 until the time of his death in 1968, as an artistic gesture.

John Cage noted that the concern of most interest derived from Duchamp was "the blurring of the distinction between art and life"<sup>83</sup>. A number of postwar artists developed this ambiguity by harnessing their works to the presentation of a persona. The French artist Yves Klein's presenting of the invisible work *Le Vide*<sup>84</sup> ('The Void') (1958) and the Italian Piero Manzoni's signing of individuals to produce 'living sculptures'<sup>85</sup> (1961) invite consideration of the artist as a talented individual independent of their mastery of particular techniques. Though this position was advanced rapidly as a consequence of the notoriety of certain interventions, such as Manzoni's marketing of 90 canisters of his own excrement, unambiguously sold as *Artist's Shit*<sup>86</sup>, (1961) there remained a distinction between activities the artist might carry out as part of their everyday existence and those that they wished to be considered art.

An alternate means of blurring the parameters of art could be seen in the interventions of Fluxus, a loose group of artists from numerous disciplines, described by the critic Henry Martin as "a wildgoose chase into the zone of everything ephemeral"<sup>87</sup>, who devised works that were by turns mundane, spectacular and puzzling (see fig. 4). Performed at Fluxconcerts and Fluxfestivals, the intention of these

was, according to the group's founder George Maciunas, to "serve only as educational means to convert the audiences to such non-art experiences in their daily lives"<sup>88</sup>. Because of the diversity of its associates' concerns and interests, Fluxus did not advance a commonly agreed-upon aesthetic or constitute a body of work that might distinguish it from other movements; some of the pieces have the quality of a Happening, others approximate the conventions of a musical performance and some seem difficult to distinguish from activities that might occur unremarked-upon outside of the performance space.

<p>HENS, 1963 3 hens are released and then caught</p> <p>I WILL BE BACK IN 10 MINUTES, 1963 Performer positions on stage a poster announcing: "I will be back in 10 minutes" and goes across the street to have a cup of coffee</p> <p>AUDIENCE PIECE NO. 4 After audience seats themselves, performers proceed to clean theater very thoroughly: wash floor, vacuum chairs and curtain, white wash the stage, change light bulbs etc</p> <p>3 PIECES FOR AUDIENCE, 1964 1. change places 2. talk together 3. give something to your neighbour</p>
--

fig. 4 Four Fluxus events by Robert Watts, 1963-1964

The conception of the art object considered to be such because of the artist's involvement, evident in the work of Duchamp, Klein and Manzoni, and that of the art object being that which is situated in a particular frame, apparent in the "non-art experiences" within Fluxus performances, is amalgamated in the example of the German artist Joseph Beuys. Though allied to the Fluxus movement, Beuys advanced a reconceived notion of art inextricably bound up with the particular circumstances of his life, to the extent that he established 'Fluxus Zone West' in 1967 as a body concerned with "the situation of western man"<sup>89</sup>, a project somewhat more clearly defined than any that might be attributed to the founding collective.

Beuys consciously evoked both the near past of Romanticism, elevating the role of the artist to the central position in an understanding of the art work, and the distant past where the shaman united aesthetic, spiritual and scientific concerns within a unitary efficacious practice. His championing of a prescriptive definition of art would seem at odds with the pluralistic tenor of the period, though rather than simply foreground the position of the artist he sought to discover what constituted the artist through performing such a condition. As the object and the beholder had been 'pretexts' to the performative work discussed above, that in their playing out disrupted fixed points of origination, so Beuys employed the visibility granted to him as artist to undermine, through his actions, the limited remit of one destined to fashion cultural products. He differs in this respect from Andy Warhol, an American contemporary also regarded as having blurred the distinction between their life and their work in the sense that Warhol, situated amidst a Pop sensibility that celebrated mass production and consumer culture, might evince an accepting, ironic stance toward his condition to declare that "everything is sort of artificial. I don't know where the art stops and the real begins"<sup>90</sup> whereas Beuys' famous dictum "ART=MAN"<sup>91</sup> is almost as inclusive but suggests a humanistic ethos that stands apart from the material world.

#### IV

Where Warhol and Beuys, in differings ways, can be seen to conflate the artist and the object, advancing their ideas and their more conventional, insentient art objects in a highly visible and vocal manner, Body Art undertook to explore the implications of the projection of the self in the world. In a manner comparable to Minimalism's revealing, and hence disrupting, of the terms by which the object is known, Body Art sought to expose the structure that dictates interpersonal communications. Evident at the end of the 1960s, Body Art displayed

the influence of a number of practices that had emerged in the earlier part of the decade. Vito Acconci, one of the foremost American artists working in this field, had begun working with his body after several years writing poetry that sought to address the act of writing and its limits rather than regard it as a transparent activity that illuminated some pre-existing time and space. Acconci found this transparency questioned in Minimal Art, forcing him to make observations of his own state before the object:

...I was in a certain condition, I had a headache for example. I had a certain history, I had a certain bias...what minimal art did for me was to confirm for myself the fact that art obviously had to be this relation between whatever it was that started off the art and the viewer.<sup>92</sup>

Notions of the performer arising from the work produced by the Judson Dance Company acknowledged the importance of the relationship between the object-as-provocation and the beholder. Yvonne Rainer's analysis of her dance piece, *Trio A*, written in 1966, suggests that in order that the physical being in performance be discerned, rather than the projection of character and attitude, "ideally one is not even oneself, one is a neutral doer"<sup>93</sup>. Such 'neutrality' lends an apparent simplicity to much Body Art, as in the case of Acconci's *Following Piece* (1969)<sup>94</sup>, though the performance itself gives rise to a multitude of concerns :

Daily Scheme: choosing a person at random, in the street, any location; following him wherever he goes, however far or long he travels (the activity ends when he enters a private place - his home, office, etc.)<sup>95</sup>

The individual being followed might feel threatened, bemused or be unaware of her pursuer, who in turn relinquishes his freedom to

someone over whom he has no control. The piece explores potentially intrusive behaviour, not by indulging in it before an audience, or by showing a film of the work, but by the artist placing himself in a particular situation. Body Art took full advantage of the increasing proliferation of video and film equipment, not simply as a recording device, but instead creating work that confused or contrasted physical with empathetic distance. In its refusal or inability to conform to the conventions of the various media within and across which it operates, Body Art does not present the body as subject, as a representation of the idea of the body, but explores the body-in-the-world. Where Beuys performs the role of artist in a world of social interaction, the Body Artist wishes to reveal the individual self, the figural component - to borrow Lyotard's terminology - of the body as it is perceived through discourse. The artist must perform the self in such a way that disrupts reflex invocation of set modes of communication, often having to place the body in situations of deprivation, danger and endurance where the ability to resist automatic behaviour is lessened.

Though superficially the most introverted of practices, Body Art necessarily foregrounds the means of its transmission as it attempts to evade existing channels of communication between artist and beholder that not only determines what can be transmitted but also fixes those participating in the roles of sender and recipient. In those instances where the artist employs an existing medium, the work is frequently considered excessive or repulsive because it chafes against the limits of what might be transmitted. Herman Nitsch, with his 'Orgies, Mysteries, Theatre' group staged elaborate rituals entailing disembowlement, crucifixion and an abiding interest in the visceral and scatological. By these actions Nitsch sought to acknowledge the repression of the will to kill, a taboo, the artist believed, that found release in war and torture, but might be less harmfully sated by the artist. Prior to the

disembowelling of a dead lamb, a frequent occurrence in his work during the early seventies, Nitsch offered his reasons for the action to the audience:

Through my artistic production ( a form of the mysticism of being), I take upon myself the apparent negative, unsavoury, perverse, obscene, the passion and the hysteria of the act of sacrifice so that YOU are spared the sullyng, shaming descent into the extreme.<sup>96</sup>

In declaring himself to be a substitute for the beholder, Nitsch revealed a fundamental concern of Body Art, namely attending to the common condition of artist and beholder as individuals. Though Nitsch consciously employed theatrical means, hoping to exceed the limitations of the form, becoming the bearer of the collective violence of the audience rather than being an actor charged with entertaining them, other artists, such as Gina Pane, Chris Burden and Dennis Oppenheim, sought to test and expose the repressions, limits, idiosyncrasies and pleasures of the human mind and body without these explorations being diluted through forms of communication that repressed or marginalised such revelations.

## V

By the mid 1960s, artists' use of the performative had encouraged productive dialogue between practitioners previously left to pursue their own disciplines in relative isolation. In New York, in particular, the work at the Judson Dance Theatre, the open court held by Warhol at the Factory and the dissemination of, and participation in, Fluxus events and Happenings, exposed artists to ideas and ways of working that they utilised in different contexts. That these ideas might be utilised within the context of a long-established discipline, such as theatre, in a way

that enhances the practice rather than diminishes it or stifles the innovatory impulse, is apparent in the work of Richard Foreman and Robert Wilson. Their productions have been considered collectively as advancing a "theatre of images"<sup>97</sup> because of their ambivalent attitude toward the text, favouring a staging that is dependent more on its visual elements than on a narrative structure. Foreman's writing on the nature and intentions of his work, collected in a series of manifestos<sup>98</sup>, frequently advances arguments that reflect concerns evident in other fields. His hopes for stage performance, for example, are in accord with the Minimalists' aim to deal with the object *qua* object, rather than as a significant form: he wished to

create a stage performance in which the spectator experiences the danger of art not as involvement or risk or excitement, not as something that reaches out to vulnerable areas of his person, but rather the danger as a possible *decision* he (spectator) may make upon the occasion of confronting the work of art. The work of art as a *contest* between object (or process) and viewer.<sup>99</sup>

Wilson, similarly, invites the beholder to regard the encounter with the work as one in which she remains able to exercise her mind rather than have it respond unquestioningly to the provocations of the work, giving her "time and space in which to think."<sup>100</sup> In neither instance is this a timeless contemplation, but proceeds alongside the playing out of the work and is encouraged by the disruption of narrative, employing such means as repetition, non-sequential text, conflicting actions and self-referential elements, that invite the beholder to perform, choosing to ignore that occurrence, stopping to reflect on what might have occurred, straining to fit some new element into a tenuous grasp of the work before her etc. In most instances the activity is almost wholly cerebral, though in Wilson's extended works, such as the twelve-hour piece *The*

*Life and Times of Joseph Stalin*<sup>101</sup> and the week-long *KA MOUNTAIN AND GUARDenia TERRACE*<sup>102</sup>, the beholder's sense that they might determine the nature of their relationship to the work, given that they would be unlikely to experience its entire length, is heightened by the inclusion of other competing demands upon them, such as the need for refreshment and sleep.

Where Assemblages and the Happenings after them expanded with little regard for the consequential breakdown of an enclosing frame and Beuys refused to acknowledge any such frame, Wilson celebrates its persistence. His stage is populated with all the requisite elements of an illusionistic nineteenth-century production. Because these elements do not coalesce into a unified whole, but seem to be advancing conflicting narratives, the work seems to engage in a dialogue with itself rather than offer a totality for the beholder's consumption. Not only do the occurrences on stage refuse to order themselves into complimentary plot and sub-plot but the time and space of the stage are subjected to manipulations that look toward consideration of the work in terms of image rather than action. Actors move from one side of the stage to the other over a period of twenty minutes, whilst unconnected activities occur simultaneously throughout the space, their relative importance unstated. When sudden movement occurs in the midst of the slowly mutating stage picture, its appearance is startling, especially when it is only visible for an instant, sufficient to rouse the beholder from contemplation yet not substantial enough to hold her attention. The effect is conveyed by Baudrillard's understanding of the workings of seduction: Seduction is not founded on the production of meaning, nor does it actively resist meaning. It does not open up a radical heterogeneity as an end in itself, as a moment of release from the discursive, but instead only begins to operate at the moment when meaning gives way to surface and appearance.



Distinctive signs, full signs, never seduce us. Seduction only comes through empty, illegible, insoluble, arbitrary, fortuitous signs, which glide by lightly, modifying the index of refraction of space. They are signs without a subject of enunciation, nor an enounced, they are pure signs in that they are neither discursive nor generate any exchange. The protagonists of seduction are neither locutor nor interlocutee, they are in a dual and antagonistic situation. As such the signs of seduction do not signify; they are of the order of the ellipse, of the short circuit, of the flash of wit (*le trait d'esprit*).<sup>103</sup>

It is the resistance to an exchange between beholder and object that disrupts form in Wilson's work. There is no lack of material produced by the artist - indeed, its profusion alone might overwhelm the beholder - though its harnessing of overtly visual, and, subsequently, textual matter within and against the conventions of the stage results in an undifferentiated stream of phenomena. Wilson's precise regulation of formal elements in the midst of such disruption gives rise to an object, even as the means of responding to it are left for the beholder to discover.

## Conclusion

---

By utilising the terms of several disciplines - theatre, visual arts, literature and music - yet allowing them to operate independently of one another rather than combine to produce "the collective art-work",<sup>104</sup> Wilson wishes to "build an agreed-upon language with the audience and then...destroy it in order to rebuild"<sup>105</sup>. It is a strategy that informs much of the work considered here in that it acknowledges the value of existing form, whether it be the gallery space in which the Minimal sculpture is situated or the attention accorded Beuys because of the expectations the beholder has of the artist. What distinguishes this work as

performative, however, is that form is not allowed to function as the boundary within which the object may be known, nor is it simply that which must be transgressed. Instead, disrupting the terms of the work clears a space in which artist and beholder can function, unencumbered by the need to defend or attack that which was there before them.

In addressing the practices of the five artists identified above, the following chapters examine ways of working that exemplify different approaches to the disruption of form. Robert Morris, whose work is considered in the opening chapter, not only generates some of the most provocative Minimal sculpture of the period, but also enters into the critical debate concerning the status of form. He does not use theory primarily to defend or explain his practice but instead employs it as the most suitable means of expressing certain ideas; it becomes a further practice situated alongside his involvement in numerous fields, including dance, film and politics. Allan Kaprow, the most prolific instigator of Environments and Happenings, is the subject of the second chapter. From a position of pre-eminence at the beginning of the 1960s, Kaprow followed the implications of the work even as they led him further away from the attention of the art world. By contrast, Joseph Beuys and his work, considered in chapter three, are fêted by the art establishment; the contradictions arising from the artist's championing of art as the creative potential of the individual even as the stage from which he declaims rests on the economically driven establishment, is but one of the tensions that frustrate any prolonged consideration of Beuys. The Body Artist Chris Burden situates much of his work at the originating point of this tension, namely the difficulty of articulating the self without it being appropriated by, and contained within, the medium employed for this purpose. Generating reactions that tend toward either admiration or disgust, rarely indifference, Burden's intent is not to shock, but to reach beyond the point at which such reflex responses inhibit the dialogue

between individuals. After exploring Burden's work in chapter four, the final chapter regards the innovative work arising from Robert Wilson's juxtaposing of heterogeneous elements within and against the parameters of the stage.

The range of practices considered here can not be thought of as inclusive, as one of the unifying characteristics of performative work is its formal diversity. It is *the nature of the work* that is performed, an encounter between artist, object and beholder *in* the world, rather than a gathering of the three that can only reaffirm their relationship with one another and to the world beyond the gallery or theatre space. Whether the work addresses the role of the artist, the status of the object, the purpose of art, the expectations of the beholder or any other area previously obscured by the unquestioned status of form, it cannot proceed in isolation. Disruption of one of the terms upon which form is predicated inevitably weakens the stability of the others. In this sense, the work, or more correctly, the provocation occasioned by it, is necessarily performative, as it becomes the site for the generation of identity of artist, object and beholder as they work *through* form (*per-form*) rather than within it.

1 Longman Concise English Dictionary

2 see Burgin, Victor. "Socialist Formalism " Studio International Vol 191  
no. 980 March/April 1976, reprinted in Harrison, Charles, and Paul  
Wood, (eds.) Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing  
3 Ideas, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992. p913.

4 Bell, Clive. Art, Oxford: 1914 passage from Chapter 1 reprinted in  
Harrison, Charles and Paul Wood p116

5 ibid., p113

6 Todorov, Tzvetan. "Some approaches to Russian Formalism " 20th  
Century Studies December 1972 p10.

7 Shklovsky, Victor "Art as Technique." in Lemon, L.T and M.J Reis,  
(eds.) Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays, Lincoln: University of  
Nebraska Press, 1965 cited in Bennett, Tony Formalism and Marxism  
New York: Metheun & Co., Ltd, 1979 p24

8 see Langer, Susanne K. "Chapter VIII: On Significance in Music." in  
Philosophy in a New Key: A Study of the Symbolism of Reason, Rite  
9 and Art, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1942.  
pp. 204-245.

10 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from  
Philosophy in a New Key, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd,  
1953 p32

11 ibid., p46.

12 Each of these disciplines, along with other forms, including prose and  
dance, is dealt with by Langer in separate chapters.

13 ibid., p51.

14 ibid., p397.

15 ibid., p397.

16 Though Greenberg categorically refutes such an assertion, his concern  
to situate the primacy of form at a particular historical moment marks  
a break that Langer feels no need to acknowledge. See Bradbury,  
Malcolm, and James McFarlane, (eds.) Modernism: 1890-1930  
Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976 p24.

17 Greenberg, Clement "Modernist Painting." Arts Yearbook, no. 1, New  
York, 1961. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory, (ed.) The New Art, revised  
version of 1966 (ed.) New York: E P Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973 p69.

18 ibid., p68.

19 Greenberg, Clement "Louis and Noland " Art International Vol.4 no. 5  
1960 quoted in Lucie-Smith, Edward, Movements in Art since 1945  
London: Thames and Hudson, 1969 pp 104-106.

20 Morris Louis, Beta Theta, 1961. Acrylic on canvas 8 ft 7in x 14ft 1/8  
in.

21 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form p63

Greenberg considers that the avant-garde had misunderstood Pollock  
in much the same way that Duchamp had misunderstood Cubism. See  
Greenberg, Clement. "Counter Avant-Garde." Art International  
Vol.XV, 20 May 1971. pp.16-19 reprinted in Masheck, Joseph. (ed.)  
Marcel Duchamp in Perspective, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.,  
1975. pp.122-33.

see for example Kaprow, Allan. "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock." Art  
News, Vol. 57 no.6 October 1958 pp 24-26,55-57, and Morris, Robert.  
"Anti Form." Artforum, Vol.6, no.8 April 1968 pp 33-5.

- 22 Jackson Pollock. *Lavender Mist* 1950. Oil, enamel and aluminium paint on canvas 86½ x 119 in.
- 23 Hughes, Robert. *The Shock of the New*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981. p314
- 24 Buettner, Stewart. *American Art Theory: 1945-1970*. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981. p105.
- 25 Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." *Artforum* Vol 5 no 10 June 1967. pp 12-23. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory, (ed.) *Minimal Art*. New York: E P Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968. pp.116-147.
- 26 *ibid.*, p118.
- 27 *ibid.*, p137.
- 28 Robert Morris. *Slab*. 1962-68. Painted Wood. 11 5/8 x 95 3/4 x 95 3/4 in.
- 29 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." p34.
- 30 Longman Concise English Dictionary.
- 31 Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 2." *Artforum* Vol.5. no.2. October 1966. pp.20-3.
- 32 Fried, Michael. p130.
- 33 *ibid.*, p140.
- 34 *ibid.*, p145.
- 35 see Langer, Susanne K. *Feeling and Form*. pp 120-21.
- 36 *ibid.*, p77.
- 37 *ibid.*, p307.
- 38 Fried, Michael. p141.
- 39 *ibid.*, p130.
- 40 Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute* trans G Van den Abbeele. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979. p79.
- 41 see Lyotard, Jean François. "The Sublime and the avant-garde." trans L Liebmann, G Bennington and M Hobson. *Paragraph* no 6 1985. pp 1-18. reprinted in Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Lyotard Reader*. Benjamin, Andrew (ed.) Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989. pp 196-211.
- 42 Lyotard, Jean François. "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" in *The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge* trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984. p81.
- 43 *ibid.*, p81.
- 44 Fried, Michael. p141.
- 45 Lyotard, Jean François. "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" p81.
- 46 Abrams, M. H. "Chapter 1: Orientation of critical theories." in *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953.
- 47 Though Duchamp produced work before 1912, his *Nude Descending a Staircase No.2* of that year was his first influential work. Leaving unfinished a major work, *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors*, Even after 8 years work, in 1923, Duchamp later 'retired' from the art.

world to play chess until his death in 1968. During the period 1944-66 he had secretly constructed a final work, *Etant Donnees*, that in its concern with representation and voyeurism, challenged preconceptions surrounding his oeuvre.

- 48 Marcel Duchamp. *Fountain*. 1917. Ready-made.
- 49 Marcel Duchamp. *Bottlerack*. 1914. Ready-made. 25 x in.
- 50 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form. p46.
- 51 Marcel Duchamp in an unpublished interview with Harriet, Sidney and Carole Janis (1953), listed in the catalogue of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, p81, cited in Bailly, Jean-Christophe. Duchamp. England: Art Data, 1986. p54.
- 52 Duchamp, Marcel, letter to Hans Richter cited in Lucie-Smith, Edward. "Pop Art" in Stangos, Nikos (ed.) Concepts of Modern Art revised and enlarged ed. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981. p227.
- 53 Stewart Buettner considers Motherwell's book, Duchamp's installation and the visit of the Gutai Group of Japan to New York in 1958 to be the three critical events of greatest significance to the artistic milieu of the 1950s (see Buettner, Stewart. American Art Theory 1945-1970 pp.108-110.)
- 54 Sohm, H. (ed.) Happenings and Fluxus. Cologne: Koelnischer Kunstverein, 1970. unpaginated.
- 55 Cage's *Cartridge Music* was one of the scores used in "A Concert of Dance", 6 July 1962. (see Kaye, Nick. Postmodernism and Performance. London: Macmillan, 1994. pp 90-93.)
- 56 Though Maciunas and other key members of Fluxus had collaborated previously, often under the banner of 'Neo-Dada', the movement's first performances were as part of the Fluxus International Festival of New Music in Wiesbaden, Germany 1/9 - 23/9/62.
- 57 The exhibition, entitled "New Work", was held between 8 January and 2 February 1962, and was reviewed by several critics, including Michael Fried. (see Fried, Michael. "New York Letter." Art International. Vol.7 no.2. February 1963. p 64.)
- 58 Consisting of seven panels, the work was subsequently displayed within the performance of Cage's *Untitled Event*.
- 59 Such as *Blue Monochrome*. 1961. Oil on cotton cloth over plywood. 6'4 7/8" x 55 1/8in.
- 60 Displayed collectively as part of the "Sixteen Americans" exhibition 1959-60.
- 61 see Greenberg, Clement. "After Abstract Expressionism" Art International. Vol. VI no. 8, October 1962. pp 24-32.
- 62 Donald Judd. *Untitled*. 1969. Stainless steel with blue Plexiglass, ten units. each 9" x 40 1/4 x 31 1/4in., at 9 1/4in. intervals.
- 63 Carl Andre. *Steel-Magnesium Plain*. 1969. Steel and magnesium. 3/8 x 72 x 72in. overall.
- 64 Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- 65 Lyotard, Jean-François. Discours, figure. Paris: Klincksieck, 1971.
- 66 see Readings, Bill. pp 17-23.
- 67 Ibid., pxxxi.
- 68 Ibid., pxxx.

- 69 see Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 2." p23.
- 70 Pablo Picasso. *Still Life with Chair Caning* 1912. Collage. 10¼ x 13¼ in.
- 71 Jasper Johns. *White Flag* 1955. Encaustic and collage on canvas 78½ x 120¼ in.
- 72 Jasper Johns. *Tango* 1955. Encaustic and collage on canvas with objects 43 x 55 in.
- 73 Jasper Johns in Crichton, Michael. *Jasper Johns*. New York: Harry N. Abrams & Whitney Museum of American Art, 1977. p30.
- 74 First performed on 29 August 1952 in Woodstock, New York.
- 75 John Cage in Kobler, John. "Everything We Do Is Music." *The Saturday Evening Post* October 19, 1968. quoted in Kostelanetz, Richard (ed.) *Conversing with Cage*. New York: Limelight Editions, 1988. p65.
- 76 Allan Kaprow. *Eat*. Environment. Caves of old Ebling Brewery, the Bronx. January 18, 19, 25, and 26, 1964.
- 77 The suspicion of theatrical means is explicitly stated by Allan Kaprow in his book, "Assemblage, Environments and Happenings", though a Happening such as Red Grooms' *The Burning Building*, presented in December 1959, declared itself to be a play, and largely adhered to theatrical form. (For an account of this piece see Kirby, Michael. *Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1965. pp.113-18.
- 78 Jean-Jacques Lebel. *Funeral Ceremony of the Anti-Process*. Venice. July 14, 1960.
- 79 Originally mailed to friends and colleagues, Brecht's scores were collected into a set referred to as *Water Yam*. (George Brecht. *Water Yam* (collected scores) 1963. Fluxus Edition, Wiesbaden, West Germany, and New York. Cardboard box with offset printed paper label, containing scores offset on card stock; box 15.3 x 16.5 x 4.4 cm.)
- 80 Claes Oldenburg. *Moviehouse*. Film-Makers' Cinematheque, New York. December 1965.
- 81 Wolf Vostell. *You. A Decollage Happening for Bob and Rhett Brown*. Performed at a swimming pool, orchard, and tennis court at King's Point, New York. April 19, 1964.
- 82 Man Ray. *Duchamp as Rose Selavy* c.1920-21 and Man Ray. *Duchamp, Star-Shaved Head* 1921.
- 83 Cage, John. "John Cage on Marcel Duchamp." in Masheck, Joseph (ed.) *Marcel Duchamp in Perspective*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975. p158.
- 84 Yves Klein. *La Vide*. Galerie Iris Clert, Paris. April 1958.
- 85 Piero Manzoni. *Living Sculptures*. various locations, including Genoa. 1961.
- 86 Piero Manzoni. *Artist's Shit*. 1961. Edition of 90. Can and 30g of excrement.
- 87 Henry Martin cited in Phillpot, Clive and Jon Hendricks (eds.) *Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1988. p7.
- 88 George Maciunas in *Fluxus etc / Addenda II: The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection*. Pasadena, California. California Institute of Technology, 1983. cited in Phillpot, Clive and Jon Hendricks (eds.) p15.

- 89 Joseph Beuys quoted in Adriani, Gotz, Winnifred Konnertz and Karin Thomas. Joseph Beuys: Life and Works trans. Patricia Lech. Cologne: Barron's Educational Series Inc., 1973. p162.
- 90 Andy Warhol quoted in O'Pray, Michael (ed.) Andy Warhol Film Factory. London: British Film Institute, 1989. p156.
- 91 Joseph Beuys quoted in Jappe, Georg. "A Joseph Beuys Primer." trans. David Britt. Studio International September 1971. p67.
- 92 Acconci, Vito. Recorded documentation by Vito Acconci of the exhibition and commission for San Diego State University. April-May 1982. (Audio Cassette) cited in Kaye, Nick. Postmodernism and Performance. p27.
- 93 Rainer, Yvonne. "A Quasi Survey of Some "Minimalist" Tendencies in the Quantitatively Minimal Dance Activity Midst the Plethora, or an Analysis of *Trio A*" in Yvonne Rainer: Work 1961-73. Halifax, Canada: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974. p65.
- 94 Vito Acconci. *Following Piece*. Street Works IV, Architectural League, New York. October 3-25 1969.
- 95 Avalanche. Special Issue: Vito Acconci. no 6. Fall 1972. p31.
- 96 Hermann Nitsch quoted in Henri, Adrian. Environments and Happenings. London: Thames and Hudson, 1974. p168.
- 97 The term was coined by Bonnie Marranca as the title of a book containing the score and analysis of a Wilson, Foreman and Lee Breuer (of Mabou Mines) production. See Marranca, Bonnie. The Theatre of Images. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977.
- 98 Foreman, Richard. Plays and Manifestos. Davy, Kate (ed.) New York: New York University Press, 1976.
- 99 *ibid*, p70.
- 100 Jones, Robert. "Robert Wilson's 'Einstein' returns to the stage." The New York Times. 2 December 1984. pp 5,24.
- 101 First performed on 14/12/73 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York.
- 102 Performed at Shiraz, Iran, as part of the Festival of Shiraz, Persepolis, 1972.
- 103 Baudrillard, Jean. The Ecstasy of Communication. trans. Bernard & Caroline Schutze. New York: Semiotext(e), 1988. pp 59-60.
- 104 The synthesis of art-forms in the opera is Richard Wagner's hope in "The Art-Work of the Future", cited in Symons, Arthur. "The Ideas of Richard Wagner." The Quarterly Review. July 1905. reprinted in Bentley, Eric (ed.) The Theory of the Modern Stage. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968. pp 286-91.
- 105 Robert Wilson, quoted in Heuvel, Michael Vanden. "Complementary Spaces: Realism, Performance and a New Dialogics of Theatre." Theatre Journal. Vol 44. 1992. pp 47-58.



The diversity of Robert Morris' activities, embracing sculpture, dance, film, performance, political activism and writing, are a reflection of the artist's concern to explore specific ideas and theories rather than subject these to the constraints of any one discipline. His particular affinity for sculpture is evident in a body of work that employs the sculptural object as an opening gambit in a dialogue with the beholder. This then overshadows the centrality of the object, as the sense of the work being performed exceeds that of it being present within the physical limits of the sculpture. For such a dialogue to occur, Morris instigates a series of disjunctions that enable object and beholder to meet in the same space. Once initiated, these moves have a cumulative effect, calling into question the fundamental tenets upon which the autonomy of the object rests. Morris' work challenges the "otherness" of the art work propounded by the critic Susanne Langer<sup>1</sup>, highlights the conservatism of Clement Greenberg's Modernist doctrine<sup>2</sup> and prompts Michael Fried to acknowledge a fundamental distinction between the autonomous object and the work of Morris and other Minimalist sculptors, marking not a shift in content or even form but in the relationship between object, artist and beholder.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter primarily considers the artist's sculptural works in the period 1960-1970 that stage the encounter of object and beholder, which will be divided into two distinct groups. The first of these, the simple polyhedrons, or Primary Structures<sup>4</sup>, are discussed as a means of shifting the relationships that constitute form from within the work out into the immediate circumstances that they share with the beholder. The second group, presaged by Morris' essay "Anti Form"<sup>5</sup>, signal a move away from basic geometric shapes with a strong gestalt toward engagement with materials that frustrate the immediate assimilation of

form. The work addressed below is invariably addressed by critics in relation to Minimal Art<sup>6</sup> (Primary Structures) and Process Art (Anti Form). The photographs of the Primary Structures (see plates 4, 7 and 10) are perhaps the most commonly reproduced images depicting Minimal Art, while the Anti Form work and the participatory pieces both engage with the Minimal aesthetic, though are considered by several critics to mark a break with what came to be regarded as "a philosophical commitment to the abstract, anticompositional, material object".<sup>7</sup> In her study of Minimal Art, Frances Colpitt restricts the term to the plastic arts, and to the period from Frank Stella's black paintings in 1959 until Robert Morris' process oriented work at the end of the 1960s<sup>8</sup>. However, to predicate an understanding of the work of this period on the objects that remain is to construct a number of characteristics by which they might collectively be known, perpetuating an understanding of the work as contained within, and emanating from, the object.

It will be argued that, under scrutiny, the place of the object in the work is 'minimised' such that "Minimalism was in essence an attitude, not a style, and the appearance of minimalist work was a consequence of that attitude".<sup>9</sup> A number of artists deemed to fall within its remit either disapproved of the term "Minimal", or else, as is the case with Robert Morris, who referred to it as "so-called Minimal Art"<sup>10</sup> were suspicious of its connotations. "Minimal" implies a pejorative judgement, and to its detractors provided the momentum to bemoan the work's lack of content.<sup>11</sup> The argument is contested by Morris' declaration that "Simplicity of shape does not necessarily equate with simplicity of experience".<sup>12</sup> The move from a concern with shape, an optically discerned characteristic, to the generation of an experience, engaging the senses in a non-compartmentalised manner and of a durational nature, situates Morris' work within a performative rather than a wholly visual context.

## Obstacles in the gallery space

---

Confronted by the 64 ft<sup>3</sup> bulk of Morris' *Slab* (see plate 4 on page 10), attending the three nights required to hear Philip Glass' *Music in Twelve Parts*<sup>13</sup>, or observing the fluidity of motion in Yvonne Rainer's dance piece *The Mind is a Muscle, Trio A*<sup>14</sup>, the beholder is unlikely to feel that there is a lack of material to engage with. If anything is lacking, it is adherence to the art of the past as normative, a sentiment the sculptor Donald Judd suggests gives rise to the belief that new work is reductionist:

If changes in art are compared backwards, there always seems to be a reduction, since only old attributes are counted and these are [al]ways fewer...If my work is reductionist it's because it doesn't have the elements that people thought should be there.<sup>15</sup>

Just as reductive tendencies emerge by adhering to past notions of content, so too do difficulties in perception arise because the beholder is conditioned into prescribed ways of attending to works of art. In the sleeve notes to *Music in Twelve Parts*, Philip Glass asks the perturbed listener to persevere, so that

...when it becomes apparent that nothing 'happens' in the usual sense, but that, instead, the gradual accretion of musical material can and does serve as the basis of the listener's attention, then he can perhaps discover another mode of listening...It is hoped that one would then be able to perceive the music as a 'presence', freed of dramatic structure, a pure medium of sound.<sup>16</sup>

Objects		Dances
	eliminate or minimize	
1. role of artist's hand		1. phrasing
2. hierarchical relationship of parts		2. development and climax
3. texture		3. variation: rhythm, shape, dynamics
4. figure reference		4. character
5. illusionism		5. performance
6. complexity and detail		6. variety: phases and the spatial field
7. monumentality		7. the virtuosic feat and the fully extended body
	substitute	
1. factory fabrication		1. energy equality and "found" movement
2. unitary forms, modules		2. equality of parts, repetition
3. uninterrupted surface		3. repetition or discrete events
4. nonreferential forms		4. neutral performance
5. literalness		5. task or tasklike activity

fig 5 chart by Yvonne Rainer showing relationship between minimal sculpture and recent dancing, from "A Quasi Survey of Some "Minimalist" Tendencies in the Quantitatively Minimal Dance Activity Midst the Plethora, or an Analysis of *Trio A*

As the critic John Perreault observes, in a cogent exegesis of Minimal Art's concerns, "what is minimal about Minimal art...is the *means* not the ends."<sup>17</sup> In *Music in Twelve Parts*, the beholder is invited to attend to "the gradual accretion of musical material", rather than the characteristics of the material. Similarly, in a chart accompanying her analysis of *The Mind is a Muscle*, subsequently known as *Trio A* (see fig. 5), Yvonne Rainer draws parallels between Minimal object work and her "Minimal Dance Activity"; in place of "variety: phrases and the spatial field" she substitutes "singular action, event, or tone"<sup>18</sup>. Such singularity is evident in the mainly plywood Primary Structures - shapes of relatively

few sides, being symmetrical in two or more planes - that Morris worked with from the early 1960s, forms that:

...if they do not negate the numerous relative sensations of colour to texture, scale to mass, etc., do not present clearly separated parts for these kinds of relations to be established in terms of shapes. Such are the simpler forms that create strong gestalt sensations. Their parts are bound together in such a way that they offer a maximum resistance to perceptual separation. In terms of solids, or forms applicable to sculpture, these gestalts are the simpler polyhedrons.<sup>19</sup>

The catalogue entry for Robert Morris' *Slab* (one of a minority of his works to be given a title) is as follows: "*Slab*. (1962-68). Painted Wood, 11 5/8 x 95 3/4 x 95 3/4 in."<sup>20</sup> There is nothing, beyond the colour of the paint - a dull, battleship grey that Morris utilises in all his sculptures of the period - and the physicality of the thing, that differentiates the description from the object itself. Even the title denies allusion, and only the discrepancy between the mass of the wood and that of stone, the material most usually associated with the word, allows the beholder to entertain the abstract over the literal. Implicitly calling attention to the art work as a physically verifiable object in the absence of an appeal to anything beyond its confines, the work challenges Susanne Langer's contention in *Feeling and Form* that:

All forms in art...are abstracted forms; their content is only a semblance, a pure appearance, whose function is to make them, too, apparent - more freely and wholly apparent than they could be if they were exemplified in a context of real circumstance and anxious interest.<sup>21</sup>

A work such as *Slab* is more closely allied with 'real circumstance' than semblance - there are no immediately apparent elements of colour,

shape, contrast, or focus that reach beyond the physical presence of the object. In this instance, the object's rectilinear form totally occupies its given dimensions. In contrast, the sculpture of Anthony Caro, whose work Michael Fried champions whilst denigrating that of Morris, is typified by skeletal structures. *Early One Morning*<sup>22</sup> (see plate 3 on page 10), a work contemporaneous with *Slab*, occupies a small fraction of its given volume, its extremities only attained by thin steel beams projecting from the "body" of the work. The internal relationships of Caro's piece are such that they invite consideration in anthropomorphic terms, an extension of what Langer refers to as "living form"<sup>23</sup>. Thus, though the physical existence or occupancy of space of *Slab* is absolute, its 'presence', that which Langer calls "the lure of the object"<sup>24</sup> would appear to be diminished in the absence of contrasting or juxtaposed elements particular to the work. Within Langer's framework, the attraction a work of art exercises over the beholder - note how the object is ascribed volition when engaging with her aesthetic - is fundamental to its status as such:

The most immediate impression [a work of art] creates is one of 'otherness' from reality - the impression of an illusion enfolding the thing, action, statement, or flow of sound that constitutes the work. Even where the element of representation is absent, where nothing is imitated or feigned - in a lovely textile, a pot, a building, a sonata - this air of illusion, of being a sheer image, exists as forcibly as in the most deceptive picture or the most plausible narrative.<sup>25</sup>

This attraction is not to be confused with the dependency upon the beholder that Fried observes in the literalist work, that "refuses to stop confronting him, distancing him, isolating him."<sup>26</sup> The 'lure' that Langer refers to is the enticement of the beholder into the domain of the object. The "sheer image", according to Langer, contains within it the

meaning or "vital import" of the form. In the case of sculpture, "the object is removed from the real world in order to translate its data into entirely visual terms, i.e. *to make tactual space visible*" <sup>27</sup>. Thus, sculpture and painting, while possessing different formal qualities, aspire to the same condition, that of visibility. The distinction between the two forms is made at the level of the virtual mode they employ: "scene" in the case of painting - "a space opposite the eye and related directly and essentially to the eye" - and "volume" - a three dimensional space which is centred on and derives its proportions and relations from the object - a semblance, or *image* of our own space, in the instance of sculpture. The object, then, both lures the beholder and generates "vital import", from within.

Morris' *Slab* admits of no such centre from which "vital import" may emanate. Traditional sculpture invites the beholder to penetrate the exterior to locate the structural logic of its displacement in space. It calls upon the tension between the elements of its surface and, in figurative pieces, the organic centre of the transformation of inanimate material into the signifier for living matter<sup>28</sup>. In contrast, Morris' grey polyhedrons' only points of orientation are their edges. Such is the adherence to rectilinear form in *Slab* that the edge, rather than marking a confluence or dissipation of *internal* tension, is the point at which the beholder can engage with the work. The lack of internal cohesion is again evident in a group of fibreglass pieces Morris produced in 1967 (plate 7), comprised of building blocks of elementary shapes - isosceles triangle, banked curve, square, oblong etc. These were arranged and rearranged into various composite forms (such as an "athletics stadium" derived from four banked curves and four isosceles triangles), though the clearly visible points of intersection draw attention to the arrangement as only one possibility among many and therefore the internal logic is equally unstable. It is interesting to note that all of the pieces in this series that

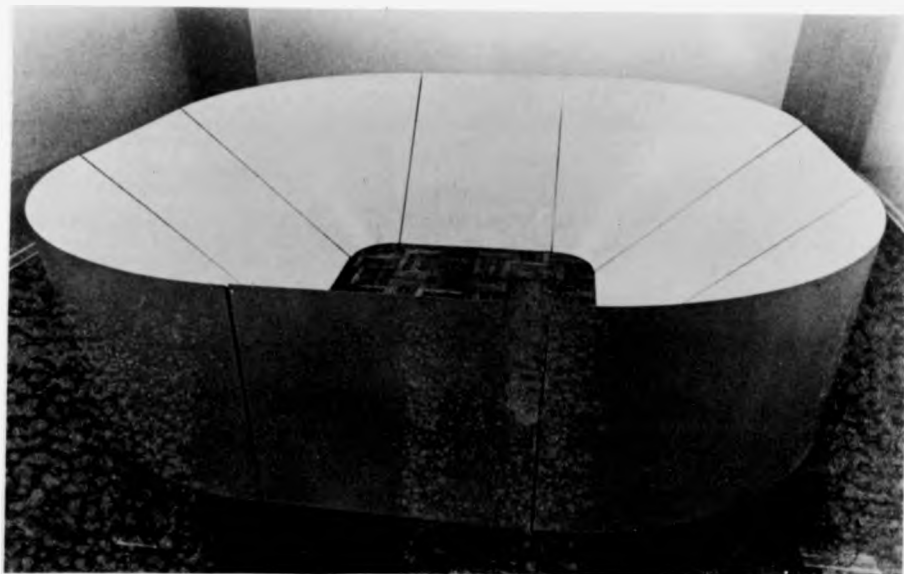


Plate 7. Robert Morris. *Untitled (Wedges)*. 1967. Grey fibreglass.

subscribe to an enclosed shape, whether circular, ovoid, square, or rectangular, move toward a centre that is either empty or diminishes to nothing, reinforcing the lack of an interior that determines the outward appearance of the object.<sup>29</sup> In *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, Rosalind Krauss notes that this externality of meaning marks a shift from a private, psychological space to a public, cultural space such that rather than the object detaching itself from its actual setting it depends on it to determine what it is.<sup>30</sup> Without the necessary formal elements whereby the "sheer image" is created, the object must be *experienced* rather than perceived.

Such an approach to the object runs counter to the fundamental principle of Langer's theory, that of "Significant Form", a property that distinguishes art from other matter, "in which the factor of significance is not logically discriminated, but is felt as a quality rather than recognised



as a function.<sup>31</sup> Lest the reader maintain any vestige of belief in the notion that they are something more than a witness to the work of art's immanence, Langer augments her argument by declaring that:

...we might do better to look upon the art object as something in its own right, with properties independent of our prepared reactions - properties which command our reactions, and make art the autonomous and essential factor that it is in every human culture.<sup>32</sup>

Langer is content to observe that these properties are unquestioningly present in art, and not elsewhere. Though painting is distinguished from sculpture by the different mode of the virtual employed - 'scene' and 'volume' respectively - the two forms are united in Langer's aesthetic in their projection of a 'sheer image'. Greenberg felt that defining properties should be foregrounded in the work, declaring that the responsibility of each art form be to recognise and openly acknowledge those unique to its medium:

It was the stressing, however, of the ineluctable flatness of the support that remained most fundamental in the processes by which pictorial art criticised and defined itself under Modernism.

In calling attention to the flatness of the support, Greenberg acknowledges the third dimension even as he excludes it from the discipline of painting. Where the qualities Langer ascribes to various forms of art do not intrude into the world of the beholder, but are instead held within a virtual realm, Greenberg admits the physical, tactile world into the previously self-perpetuating sphere of the art object. Greenberg, perhaps inadvertently, breaches the distinction between image and object that Susan Langer regards as a fundamental element in the work of art:

An image is, indeed, a purely virtual "object". Its importance lies in the fact that we do not use it to guide us to something tangible and practical, but treat it as a complete entity with only visual attributes and relations. It has no others; its visible character is its entire being.<sup>33</sup>

Greenberg distances himself from the Minimalists by suggesting that they are too closely allied to non-art in their promotion of the third dimension<sup>34</sup>. The very qualities Greenberg declares to be the concern of the Modernist art work - he cites painting's concerns as "the flat surface, the shape of the support, the properties of pigment"<sup>35</sup> - are physical attributes in excess of the "strictly optical third dimension"<sup>36</sup> that he believes the Modernist artist evokes. To reach its goal of "the expression of an absolute"<sup>37</sup> Greenberg suggests that the limits of expression be conjoined with physical limitations:

The essential norms or conventions of painting are also the limiting conditions with which a marked-up surface must comply in order to be experienced as a picture. Modernism has found that these limiting conditions can be pushed back indefinitely before a picture stops being a picture and turns into an arbitrary object; but it has also found that the further back these limits are pushed the more explicitly they have to be observed.<sup>38</sup>

By employing these physical properties in the service of the picture's immanence, Greenberg situates form at the heart of the art object. The lack of apparent content in the work of the painters Greenberg acknowledges in his essay<sup>39</sup> is seemingly compensated for by the acknowledgement of the painting's form. As Jean-François Lyotard remarks, though the absolute might be invoked by the missing contents, it is a nostalgic rather than an uncompromising exercise as "the form, because of its recognisable consistency, continues to offer to the reader

or viewer matter for solace or pleasure."<sup>40</sup> Though Greenberg recognises a paradigmatic shift that he discerns as Modernist, it is a realignment of the *inherent* properties of the work. The work of Morris challenges this internal adjustment of priorities by refusing to adhere to the autonomy of the object; the sculpture's physical properties are considered not as matter that might constitute the subject of sculpture, but as the basis for addressing the previously unacknowledged elements that contribute to the experience of art. Morris suggests that concern with internal relationships cede to those outside and acting upon the object; "space, light and the viewer's field of vision".<sup>41</sup>

In the same way that Langer regards the relationships within a work of art as constitutive rather than as its contents, *Slab*, for example, invites the beholder to regard the relationships between these three elements and the object as constituting *its* import. Because the work is regarded in the context of the aforementioned, it cannot "detach itself from the real world", as it lodges itself - and determination of what this *self* is, in relation to the wider art experience - within the terms of the phenomenal.

Langer contends that sculpture not only transforms its objecthood into virtual kinetic volume, but that it lays claim to the space surrounding it:

[The volume] is more than the area which the figure actually occupies. The tangible form has a complement of empty space that it absolutely commands, that is given with it, and is, in fact, part of the sculptural volume. The figure itself seems to have a sort of continuity with the emptiness around it, however much its solid masses may assert themselves as such. The void enfolds it, and the enfolding space has vital form as a continuation of the figure.<sup>42</sup>

Again, like the object's negotiation with the viewer in Langer's aesthetic, it is on the former's terms - "absolutely commands"- that space is dealt with. Morris' four mirrored cubes <sup>43</sup> (plate 8) invert the idea of the object claiming space for itself by giving the illusion of space invading the object. The four cubes, positioned to occupy the corners of a square, reflect the highly polished gallery floor, its walls, ceiling, the beholder (at close proximity) and each other. It is an illusionism of sorts, yet tempered by the knowledge that the surface image of the object is not fixed, but rather controlled by the space, light and, primarily - because the image alters with movement - relationship to the beholder. In this sense it is a cognate for the essence of the object being determined in relation to elements outside of its physical domain. Because of the placement of the cubes, their existence is either only in outline - the space seeming to continue onto the surface, accurately mirroring the convergence of walls or the pattern of the floor that one

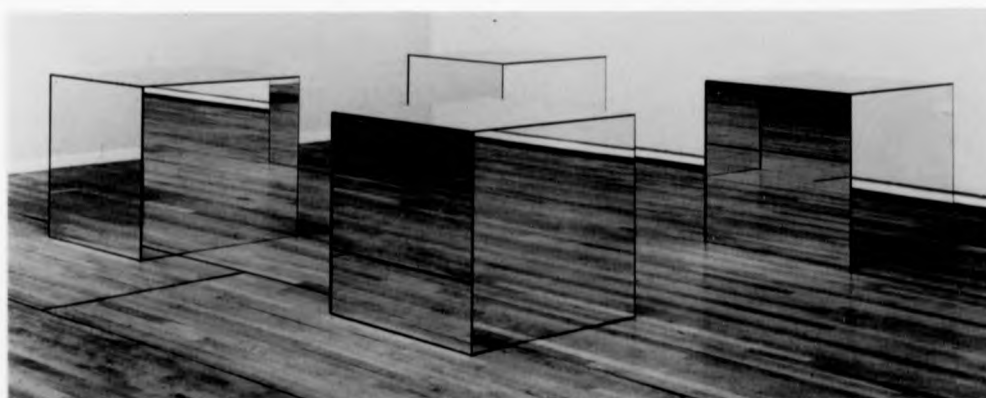


Plate 8. Robert Morris. *Untitled* 1965. Plexiglass mirror on wood, four pieces each 28x28x28"

would see if the cubes were removed - or else in relation to the displacement of the space they reflect: their form is contingent on the surrounding circumstances. Furthermore, the spacing of the cubes invites the beholder to walk amongst them, creating a situation in which the 'interior' of the object - the traditional 'organic centre' of the autonomous object - is composed not of the core of the external image, but that image itself, reflected in the adjacent cubes, on equal terms with the elements of space, light and beholder. It is a staging that is realised by the beholder as she traverses the gallery, in a continual, changing relationship with the object.

While the reflective surfaces of Morris' cubes offer much fertile ground for discussion, and the use of mirrors features prominently in Morris' work,<sup>44</sup> the four mirrored cubes also foreground the interpenetration of object and environment. In an interview with David Sylvester, Morris talks of his work as being

...less introverted than something like Brancusi. It seems more open and extroverted, in some way makes one more aware maybe of oneself. But for me it doesn't go to the point of being environment. You know, it's like these polarities. I just don't think that that's the right kind of language to use; that it's either an object or it's an environment - that, if you slip out of the compact introverted focus, then you're in an environment.<sup>45</sup>

By refusing to acknowledge his pieces as environmental, Morris evades a formalist snare. His sculptures do not aspire to the condition of the traditional, self-referential art object but neither are they allied with the contemporaneous notion of environment, propounded by Allan Kaprow as a "surrounding to be entered into."<sup>46</sup> It is not on the level of discernible similarity and difference that Morris' work is distinct from Kaprow's environment, but on that of the sensibility that informs the two

approaches. While both work against the frontality of Langer's "sheer image", Kaprow's definition of environment formalises it to the extent that prior to experiencing the work certain ground rules are evident - it will surround the beholder, it is "entered into". In contrast, Morris' pieces have clearly defined physical limits but their relationship with the circumstances in which they are found cannot be determined in advance of the beholder (as a further circumstantial element) entering the space. Given that the work invites the beholder to discern its meaning beyond the physical characteristics of the object itself, then it must negotiate with its environment even though it does not, of itself, determine it. In *Notes on Sculpture Part II*, Morris writes

...the space of the room itself is a structuring factor both in its cubic shape and in terms of the kinds of compression different sized and proportional rooms can effect upon the object-subject terms. That the space of the room becomes of such importance does not mean that an environmental situation is being established. The total space is hopefully altered in certain desired ways by the presence of the object. It is not controlled in the sense of being ordered by an aggregate of objects or by some shaping of the space surrounding the viewer.<sup>47</sup>

Morris argues against the dissipation of the object's ability to lure the beholder - its "otherness" - being complemented by an accretion of meaning elsewhere in the space<sup>48</sup>. The terms in which he describes the relationship between the object and those elements which relate to the experiencing of it, are closer to the definition of environment as *circumstantial* rather than the circumjacent notion explicit in Kaprow's 'surrounding' space. Morris' work accrues meaning in the shifting ground between the *denial* of external elements, and their *accession* - as a result of the object's *self-denial* - to the status of "otherness". Though a work such as *Corner Piece*<sup>49</sup> - a triangular-shaped object designed to sit

flush with the corner of the gallery, blurring the meeting of two walls - may thwart attempts to discern "significant form", its size alone refutes any idea of it denying its objecthood; on the contrary, it foregrounds *the thing itself*. In common with several other works by Morris, *Corner Piece* seems to be supported by the room itself, or can be seen as propping up the wall, (though close inspection reveals it is actually suspended). Neither interpretation is given precedence - instead, further ambiguities emerge; is the piece merging into its surroundings or redefining them by imposing an additional face on the conventional box-sided room? is the piece slumped from a drop from the ceiling or risen from a space on the floor? Interpretation in this instance is subject to the circumstances in which the work is found, and the beholder, rather than sensing a "rightness" about a virtual realm, has to make sense of their own world that has been problematised by the existence of the object within its bounds.

The most immediate qualities of Morris' grey polyhedrons are their size and their adherence to simple geometric forms. The scale of the object is not arbitrarily arrived at, but takes its orientation from the size of the human body, which determines one's position in relation to it. Morris argues that:

It is necessary literally to keep one's distance from large objects in order to take the whole of any one view into one's field of vision. The smaller the object the closer one approaches it and, therefore, it has correspondingly less of a spatial field in which to exist for the beholder. It is this necessary greater distance of the object in space from our bodies, in order that it be seen at all, that structures the non-personal or public mode. However, it is just this distance between object and subject that creates a more extended situation, for physical participation becomes necessary.<sup>50</sup>

Implicit in Morris' comment is the sense that the shared space of beholder and object is reaffirmed by their meeting on equal terms - the beholder neither having to stoop over or peer up at the object but rather able to address it from a position similar to that assumed in social intercourse. Elsewhere, Morris suggests that the effects of his objects do not increase in direct relation to their dimensions because were he to enlarge them to monumental proportions, the size alone would become a loaded term - implying grandeur, extravagance, domination - working against the self-effacement that the elementary shape and monochromatic appearance of the object professes.<sup>51</sup> Conversely, the sense of indeterminacy that his objects exude is heightened by their relation to body size; they do not permit one to abstract them into some Lilliputian or Brobdignagian realm but suggest to the beholder that they have import within their spatial points of reference. The dimensions of many of Morris' Primary Structures are arrived at by utilising uncut 8'x4' sheets of wood, which although, one assumes, they were chosen so as to "build in the simplest, most reasonable way"<sup>52</sup> are themselves products of such an approach and derive their dimensions from the human form (the height of a wall and a breadth facilitating carrying). *Pine Portal*,<sup>53</sup> (plate 9) throws ambiguity on the signified doorway by standing in free space.<sup>54</sup> The proportions of the piece, and the utilitarian material and construction, further convince the beholder that the object is closer to the functional than the aesthetic, but the invitation to regard the piece as marking a passage from one space to another is subject to the beholder negotiating with their concept of space. It is this dialogue between the preconceived and the fact of the presence of the object that characterises the way in which Morris' unitary forms are experienced. Alluding to Duchamp's Readymades as a consequence of its utilitarian, functional nature and bearing an unequivocal title, the work offers the beholder the stark contrast between the virtual doorway, having the appearance of a portal, and a functional doorway, its status conferred





Plate 9. Robert Morris *Pine Portal* 1961 Wood, circa 96x48x12"

through usage. In the instance of *Pine Portal*, the beholder is aware of being held in a state hovering between a passive, visual acknowledgement of the object and an active one that requires them to invest it with significance through a performative act. Those objects that do not declare themselves to be any particular thing necessitate the beholder attempting to seek out significance through performing actions with respect to the object.

Several of the Primary Structures set up a dialogue between the conception of the object as a whole and the partial view offered from any one position: thus the mental image of a cube as six-sided can never be experienced at any moment as more than three-sided. Obviously, no sculpture can be seen all at once, and Morris distinguishes his Primary Structures from more complex forms by the strength of the gestalt they create.<sup>55</sup> However, it would seem more likely that the difference resides in the nature of the gestalt, given that Langer subscribes to the immediacy and strength of the totality - and Michael Fried bears down on Morris wielding the same argument; that "*at every moment the work itself is wholly manifest*"<sup>56</sup> He continues:

(One's experience of a Caro is not incomplete, and one's conviction as to its quality is not suspended, simply because one has seen only from where one is standing. Moreover, in the grip of his best work one's view of the sculpture is *eclipsed* by the sculpture itself - which it is plainly meaningless to speak of as only *partly* present). It is this continuous and entire presentness, amounting, as it were, to the perpetual creation of itself, that one experiences as a kind of *instantaneousness*;<sup>57</sup>

Fried conceives of the object as defining itself at the moment of perception, and his sense of *eclipse* echoes Langer's "sheer image" that presents itself over the practically located object. Morris' objects, save for instances such as *Slab* and *Pine Portal*, do not declare themselves to be any known thing; they do not come into the world fully formed save for their adherence to a geometric construct. In the absence of the illusion of frontality that the "sheer image" presents, and, able to discern the simple shape of the piece, the beholder becomes aware of the arbitrariness of their position in relation to the object. Moving from this initial position does not *alter* the overall mental construction of the form but separates it from the perceived physical object. Rather than

perpetuating an unchanging image of itself, Morris' object is the catalyst for a dynamic interplay between a continuing gestalt that suggests a totality but without content, and the subsequent attempts by the beholder to substantiate the whole. This requires the beholder to change position and focus - from giving attention to the fall of light on a surface to its position relative to a wall, for example - to make choices both in terms of how to reorientate herself with regard to the object, and how, and if, the changing circumstances relate to the initial conception of the object. The decisions are interdependent, as Brian O'Doherty notes, distinguishing between an intelligent "Eye" and a subservient "Spectator":

The Eye urges the body around to provide it with information - the body becomes a data-gatherer. There is heavy traffic in both directions on this sensory highway - between sensation conceptualised and concept actualised.<sup>58</sup>

This division is most fully realised in Morris' film, *Gas Station* (1969)<sup>59</sup> which consists of two reels simultaneously projected. Both were shot from the artist's window in Newport, California, overlooking a garage. The left hand image is a fixed wide angle view, whilst the right pans and zooms around the scene some ten seconds after the time depicted on the left. The beholder is engaged in continually checking the totality on one side against the fragmentary information accumulated on the other. The work also serves to highlight the arbitrary decisions made in exploring the two images on screen, as the time delay enables the beholder to assess the relative importance of the events that Morris chooses to focus on with the roving camera against the memory of what they remembered about the scene (whether it be a car driving past or an attendant cleaning a windscreen) in the near past. These choices then become not so much an exploration of the work as an indication of the nature of the person making the choices.



Plate 10. Robert Morris. *Untitled (L-Beams)*. 1965-67. Grey fibreglass

The 'L' beams<sup>60</sup> (see plate 10) exhibited as a group of two or three, are a further example of primary structure. The repetitions of the 'L' shape, and the placing of them in different planes of orientation in relation to each other, develop the approach to the object seen in earlier pieces such as *Slab* and the four mirrored cubes. The presence of three structurally identical 'L' shapes, one placed to resemble the letter, one 'lying down', and the other balanced so that the right-angle is uppermost, together form a composite view of the shape exhibiting its three possible (unsupported) orientations in space, and, from certain angles<sup>61</sup>, all eight sides of the shape. With the solitary object, the shape could be *known* but not *seen* in totality. With three identical objects in different positions, all the sides of the shape can be seen but there is no single shape to which they belong.

Morris' rectangular box, a 1966 work again built to the dimensions of the eight-by-four sheet of wood,<sup>62</sup> creates a strong gestalt, a fixed point of reference, that within the shape contains the relationship of the top, sides and underside to each other. With the 'L' beams, the forming of such a gestalt is arbitrary - what is the top in one position is a side in another - and results in choosing one form in preference to another - the 'L' shape instead of the 'up arrow', for example - and regarding the others as inversions of the 'prime' form. Because this form is outnumbered by its variants, and because it would be impossible to regard one without knowledge - though possibly out of the sight - of the other two, the gestalt is much weaker than that of other, individual objects. As a result, the work invites the beholder to move around the objects to find an optimum position from which the gestalt can be most nearly accommodated with the visible arrangement of the pieces before them. Thus, while movement around the single object is prompted by the discrepancy between strong gestalt and insufficient content, the 'L' beams provoke movement to resolve that between a weak gestalt and an overabundance of content. This is not to suggest that resolution is the point to which the work aspires; the value resides in an awareness of the means, rather than attainment of a prescribed end.

In admitting the changing circumstances of space, light and relative body position into consideration of the object, the work is also subject to the passage of time. In the latter half of the 1960s Morris worked with a wider range of materials, though he usually still employed one substance for each piece, as in the work made of expanded aluminium mesh forming a rectangular object with a concave top<sup>63</sup> (plate 11.) Approaching the object, the gestalt is immediately grasped, though as the beholder comes closer, the structure and the material both seem to compromise the solidity of form. The internal armatures become apparent as the beholder nears, requiring the inherent characteristics of

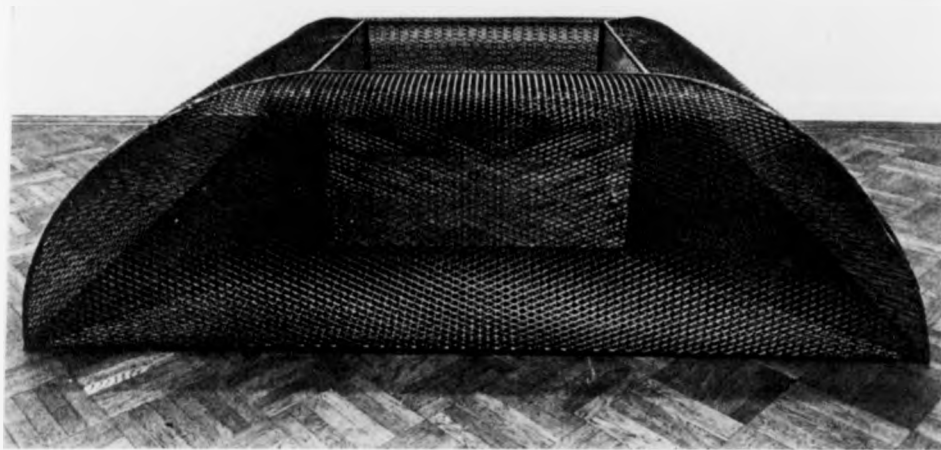


Plate 11. Robert Morris. *Untitled* 1968. Expanded aluminium, 36x144x144"

the material to be considered, namely its tendency to deform without support. As a result, the object is seen to be participating in the same resistance to gravity as the beholder. The dip towards the centre allows the floor to be seen through the mesh at close proximity (another instance of the empty centre prevalent in the artist's work) while the surface in the near distance is highlighted by the partial reflection of light. The crosshatching of the mesh's surfaces admits of varying shades (dependent on the light and the beholder's position) and the walls and floor are visible in and through the work. There are distinct differences between this and the painted plywood pieces, attributable to a recognition of the properties of the respective materials employed, but they are united in a refusal to synthesise form and content. Their relationship is determined by the beholder, who, in the absence of the conclusive "sheer image", chooses to what they will attend, the vital import being arrived at not at once, nor in conclusion, but over time. In

Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried's conception of the Modernist work, time is acknowledged only to the extent that it is generated and determined by the object. The term "contemplation" that frequently surrounds such arguments is well chosen, conveying the sense of a passive gaze on an unchanging form. Fried's "instantaneousness" is not the denial of real time, but, like the superimposition of the totality of the sculpture itself over one's necessarily partial view of it, its "eclipse". Though there are fundamental differences between Langer and Fried on certain aspects of the treatment of time in the arts, they concur in their declaration of "timelessness" before the object.

The acknowledgement of the passage of time (as opposed to the illusion or representation of time) as an inherent part of the work of art is even more heretical to Modernist sensibility than allowing that the work occupies real space; it is one thing to admit the Gods have descended from Olympus to live on this earth, but to suggest they have forsaken their immortality undermines the foundations of belief. If the object is not possessed of a timelessness or "instantaneousness" then the passage of time allows the beholder to adopt a more critical relationship to the object.

The physical presence of the object allows that it be considered with respect to the light, the beholder, and the space they share, but it is the beholder who determines how much time they will spend attending to the object, and who, in the span of this time, is at liberty to entertain conflicting opinions on the object. The object's lack of autonomy not only requires that the beholder make choices as to *how* to go about apprehending it, but also for how long, if at all. Any duration will be arbitrary and will not result in the object finally being known, for the examination proceeds in real time and thus information accumulated can not be fully applied to the continually changing circumstances, but must

admit of its contingent status. This is the antithesis of the Modernist arresting of time before the work of art that is at their heart of Fried's denunciation of Morris:

...if only one were infinitely more acute, a single infinitely brief instant would be long enough to see everything, to experience the work in all its depth and fullness, to be forever convinced of it. (Here it is worth noting that the concept of interest implies temporality in the form of continuing attention directed at the object, whereas the concept of conviction does not.)<sup>64</sup>

With every phrase alluding to the ineffable - "infinitely", "everything", "forever" - there is little hope of Fried admitting the commonplace passage of time into the experiencing of the art object.

The four mirrored cubes, the composite pieces and the 'L' beams can be regarded as both conforming to an external order, and repeating individual objects, though these qualities are subservient to more apparent characteristics; the reflective surface, the contingency of form and the effect of variation respectively. Repetition and ordering are, however, the foremost characteristics of a series of works produced in 1967/8. The nine aluminium open boxes,<sup>65</sup> thirty six inches on all sides, and spaced thirty six inches apart, consists of the repetition of the individual unit and the placing of these in a particular configuration. Again, the choice of material enters into consideration of the work, as each edge is signalled not just by the meeting of planes but by riveted corner pieces. This surface incident marks a distinct point of closure and heightens the conflict between regarding the work as an indivisible unit or as individual elements repeated. The very qualities of ordering and repetition underline the division, the former requiring an *a priori* system under which the notion of individuality is suppressed in favour of unity



and the latter needing the individuality of the object to be foremost so that it can be faithfully reproduced. Where the separation in space favours repetition, its regularity suggests ordering; the unit in the midst of the piece may owe its position to the dictates of some scheme of ordering or else as the source from which all other units are derived. Both order and repetition are capable of undermining the autonomous object, the former because it imposes a structure from outside of the object, and the latter because the denial of the object's uniqueness provides referents by which it may be judged.

The interdependent qualities of order and repetition offer ways into the work but do not lead to a definitive resolution where the beholder is able, in Fried's words, "to experience the work in all its depth and fullness, to be forever convinced of it." Just how finely poised the qualities of order and repetition are in this work can be judged by comparing it with a later work consisting of five aluminium girders running the length of the piece resting on five girders traversing the width.<sup>66</sup> The combination of individual objects so that one rests or is rested on by five others strengthens the suggestion of the whole over the separate components. Also the relationship between the form of the singular and the composite contributes to this distinction, the shape of the box being present in the individual element and the arrangement, while the girders, in gravitating toward perception as a unitary square structure lessen the sense of length evident in the individual piece. Likewise, the individual components of the respective pieces compound the different relationship to order and repetition; the boxes' open tops suggest an interior, private space possessed of each unit, but this is balanced by the open spaces between the elements of the composite object. The girders, although they can be dismantled into abutting 'u' channels, carry with them a strong sense of indivisible, practical objects, focusing attention on their arrangement rather than their individual

significance.<sup>67</sup> The question of whether the object exhibits unitary or replicated form is less concerned with challenging the uniqueness of the art object (the choice of industrial girders as the constituent element shows the artist to be at ease with the mass produced in his art) than with further disrupting an instant grasp of the object's import, inviting the beholder to interrogate it further.

### Too much to see and everything to do

The way in which choice of material is foregrounded in Morris' work has already been suggested. It is seen most clearly in the series of pieces made from felt. Where Joseph Beuys' use of felt stems from its personal, iconographic significance, Morris' felt pieces carry the utilitarian nature of the material; as underlay, lining, etc. Unlike Morris' previous materials, plywood, steel and aluminium, that have a permanency and rigidity that they share with those traditionally employed in sculpture - stone and bronze - felt is malleable. With the felt pieces, Morris makes no attempt to maintain a predetermined form against the pull of gravity but on the contrary allows gravity to dictate the form. He is not primarily concerned with gravity in the felt pieces<sup>68</sup> so much as the move away from what he terms "object-type art".

In his essay "Anti Form", Morris acknowledges the way in which his and others use of the cube and rectangle has been "brought so far forward into the definition of the work" that it "stands as a self-sufficient whole shape rather than as a relational element"<sup>69</sup> Though the Primary Structures have been considered in relation to their concern with process rather than product, it is the process of the beholder ascertaining the work from the object produced by the artist. The work with plywood resulted in shapes imposed on the material by the artist. In their adherence to simple geometric shape, they signalled a point of

union between artist and beholder - visual recognition of a conceptually understood configuration - and attention was focused on their specific roles in relation to this known entity. Having investigated the physicality inherent in Pollock's paintings, Morris became dissatisfied with the seeming inevitability of the object arising from the activity, wishing to concern himself with the process of making. Rodin's acknowledgement of the plasticity of material through autobiographical means (leaving traces in the finished work of the indentation of his hands whilst sculpting) is transformed, in the work of Pollock and Louis, Morris argues, into "the more direct revelation of matter itself"<sup>70</sup>. While the Primary Structures addressed the relationship between the object and the beholder, their condition as the realisation of the artist's intent perpetuated a concern with the art object. It is worth noting that Morris comes to this conclusion as 'Minimal Art' becomes widely known as a generic term for particular work, determined by what it looks like rather than what it does. By 1968, the work of Morris and other Minimal sculptors had moved from being displayed in small, downtown New York galleries to gaining the validation of the large institutions.<sup>71</sup> With hindsight, Morris recognised that the work, far from being reductionist, accrued a degree of self-perpetuation as a distinct and recognisable form:

How Pollock broke the domination of Cubist form is tied to his investigation of means: tools, methods of making, nature of material. Form is not perpetuated by means but by preservation of separable idealised ends. This is an anti-entropic and conservative enterprise.<sup>72</sup>

*Slab* did not examine the nature of the material it employed, rather the choice of plywood was predicated on its suitability for fashioning the intended object.<sup>73</sup>

In object-type art process is not visible. Materials often are. When they are, their reasonableness is usually apparent. Rigid industrial materials go together at right angles with great ease. But it is the *a priori* valuation of the well-built that dictates the materials. The well-built form of objects preceded any consideration of means. Materials themselves have been limited to those which efficiently make the general object form.<sup>74</sup>

A work comprising two pieces of half-inch thick felt<sup>75</sup> (plate 12) is shown - in Michael Compton and David Sylvester's overview of Morris' work up until 1971 - in two arrangements, neither of which allude to a



Plate 12. Robert Morris. *Untitled* 1968. Grey felt, two pieces each 1/2" thick

In object-type art process is not visible. Materials often are. When they are, their reasonableness is usually apparent. Rigid industrial materials go together at right angles with great ease. But it is the *a priori* valuation of the well-built that dictates the materials. The well-built form of objects preceded any consideration of means. Materials themselves have been limited to those which efficiently make the general object form.<sup>74</sup>

A work comprising two pieces of half-inch thick felt<sup>75</sup> (plate 12) is shown - in Michael Compton and David Sylvester's overview of Morris' work up until 1971 - in two arrangements, neither of which allude to a



Plate 12. Robert Morris. *Untitled* 1968. Grey felt, two pieces each 1/2" thick

recognisable shape. The composite pieces discussed earlier were also displayed in variant arrangements, though these differed in two important respects; firstly, the number of variations was limited and secondly, the final shape was conceived by Morris before being executed. In the felt pieces referred to above, though they share the two points of fixture to the wall, their *shape* cannot be reduced to a prime form from which all real and potential variations can be traced; only the amount of material present remains constant. Where *Slab* tends toward the suppression of all elements other than its shape, the felt pieces exist primarily as felt. If only one piece had been exhibited, the sense that the object was but one of an infinite number of possibilities rather than having an "otherness" arising from its unique shape would not be as evident. However, the temporality of the shape, the fact that it could not exist in that form outside of the continuing circumstances of its present display, would reassert the sense of randomness.

Morris' long association with felt has generated an evolving body of work. Those that most closely subscribe to the polemic of his essay 'Anti Form' were produced at the end of the 1960s. A nine foot roll of half-inch grey industrial felt, displayed in 1968<sup>76</sup> (plate 13) was placed on the gallery floor, loosely rolled, inviting the beholder to regard it as raw material, and, unlike Richard Serra's corresponding *Thirty-Five Feet of Lead Rolled Up*<sup>77</sup>, that forms a near perfect cylinder, suggests a transient state rather than an immutable object. Furthermore, its placement on the wooden floor of the Leo Castelli Gallery invites the beholder to consider the material in terms of its function rather more than as what appears to be an arbitrary form. It would be wrong to equate the element of chance in the felt pieces with Duchamp's *Three Stoppages*<sup>78</sup> in which the form of the work was determined by the manner in which threads dropped by the artist landed on the canvas. Chance in that instance related to the unpredictable effect of gravity;

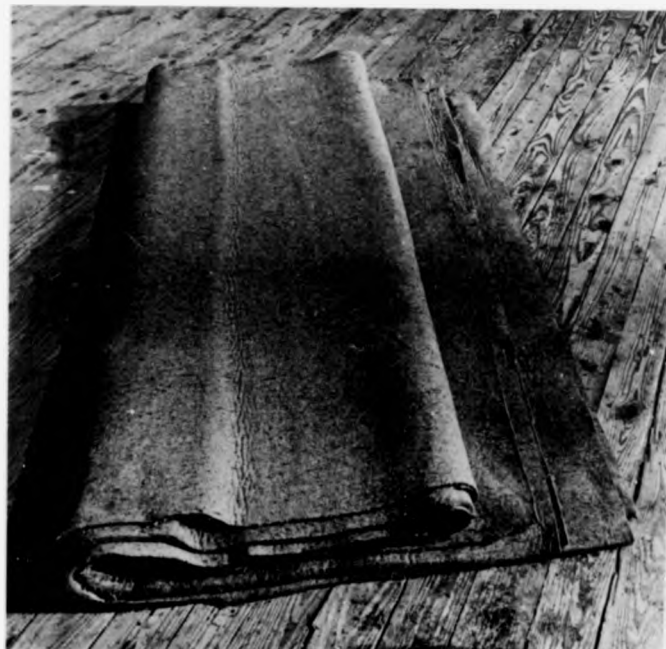


Plate 13. Robert Morris. *Untitled* 1968 Grey felt,  $\frac{1}{2}$  x 72 x 108 in.

with the felt pieces it is the point at which the artist or the exhibitor stops manipulating the pre-existent object that is subject to chance. Consequently, because the object *is* pre-existent, the effort of determining form (both on the part of Morris in shaping the felt and the beholder in trying to discern the subsequent shape) can either be seen as irrelevant if one subscribes to the primacy of the object, or, results in the object becoming a fixed point about which the beholder and the artist may perform with respect to each other.

The early felt works, especially those that had tangled strands of the material following convoluted routes through each other, were unrepeatable, though curators did attempt to reproduce the exact interweaving patterns in subsequent exhibitions<sup>79</sup>. As the work evolved,

Morris' increasing familiarity with the material's properties led to a more elaborate and more evocative ordering, prompting one critic to observe its "baroque" quality and its phallic shape.<sup>80</sup> The enduring nature of the documentation - if not the object itself - fixed the work. To counter this fixity, Morris produced "scatter" pieces or "earthworks"<sup>81</sup> which he described as

a spread of substances or things that is clearly marked off from the rest of the environment and there is not any confusion about where the work stops. In this sense it is discrete but not object-like.<sup>82</sup>

As with the early felt works, the beholder was unlikely to discern any informing principle in the work, save for the absence of such a principle. *Earthwork* (1968) (plate 14) comprised a mound of earth, grease and peat containing various metals and felt<sup>83</sup>, inviting consideration as the remains of some object that no longer exists. Where Joseph Beuys' sculptures often suggest such a dissolution, they are charged, as in the case of *The End of the Twentieth Century*<sup>84</sup> (plate 15), with an emotive attachment to the past and a corresponding awareness of a present that cannot resurrect what has passed. Though Morris' scatter pieces contain no overt references to anything beyond themselves, it is again their permanence, both spatial and temporal, that allows form to adhere to the work. The physical limits of the works, though irregular, remain limits. As Allan Kaprow notes, in a response to Morris' 'Anti Form' essay, the scatter pieces operated "strictly in contrast to, or now and then in conflict with, enframing spaces"<sup>85</sup>.

Kaprow chose to evade form through the development of Happenings that dispersed the object into the actions of those engaged in its formation. Morris, in a work entitled *Continuous Project Altered Daily*<sup>86</sup> (plates 16 & 17), attempted to lessen the focus on the object by





Plate 14. Robert Morris. *Earthwork*, 1968 Earth, grease, peat, steel, copper, aluminium, brass, zinc, felt, approximately 24x60x84"



Plate 15. Joseph Beuys. *The End of the Twentieth Century*. 1983-85. 31 basalt stones with clay filled cavity and cone shaped insert wrapped in felt. Overall size variable



eel, copper,



5. 31 basalt  
felt. Overall



Plate 16. Robert Morris. *Continuous Project Altered Daily* 1969 Earth, water, paper, grease, plastic wood. (state 2)

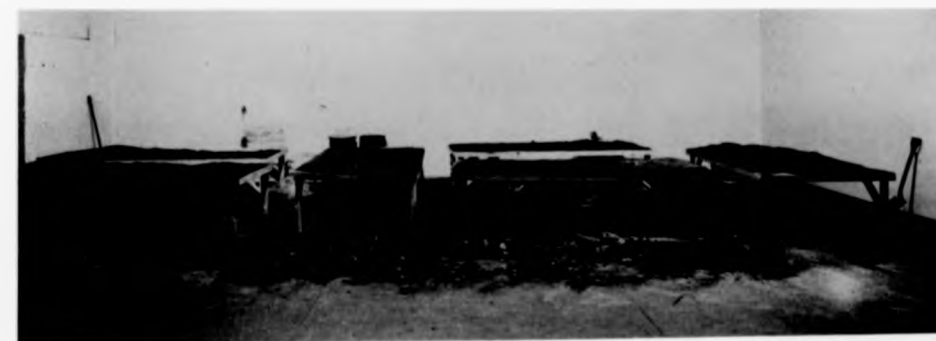


Plate 17. Robert Morris. *Continuous Project Altered Daily* 1969 Earth, water, paper, grease, plastic wood. (state 5)

instilling it with his own activity. Over a period of a month Morris manipulated a large quantity of earth, rubble, felt and other materials into different formations, the final stage comprising a room bare save for traces of the previous days' activity and photographs of the preceding stages of the work. The inclusion of the photographs mirrors the evolving nature of the work - the making and recording are not activities that are incidental to an object that is self-sufficient, but instead, might be construed as the point of the exercise. The object that does not acknowledge its maker or its audience is replaced by a work that openly declares its contingency upon the artist who adds, subtracts and manipulates its constituent elements, and the beholder, whose experience of the work is dependent on when they choose to attend. The final stage of the work does not mark a shift from sculpture to documentation, but posits the photographs as a further manipulation of the materials employed by the artist: they occupy the same space, and like the more solid matter manipulated in previous stages, require the participation of the artist.

Unlike the building block Primary Structures that were rearranged into different configurations during their residency in the gallery (plate 7), *Continuous Project Altered Daily* does not shift from one discernible form to another. Likewise, it does not become 'fixed' into one of its potentially limitless orientations as is the case with the felt pieces. To declare that Morris' activity is the work, however, is to reconceive the object in dramatic rather than plastic terms, to maintain the separation between the work as a discrete entity that can be assessed and represented and those that produce and consume it. Just as Morris disrupts form with the Primary Structures by refusing to consider them as either object or environment, so the performative quality of *Continuous Project* arises from resisting a conception of the work in either dramatic or plastic terms. Instead, artist, object and beholder are invited to

reconsider their respective positions as the work challenges and begs redefinition of their roles.

Though Morris admits a multitude of materials into *Continuous Project*, as well as participating in the work, it is distinct from the accumulation of elements in Assemblages and Environments and the performative nature of Happenings. The "found" items that populate a Rauschenberg combine painting challenge the beholder's assumptions about them through a radical juxtaposition with other elements. The identity of individual elements such as the stuffed goat and the car tyre in *Monogram*<sup>87</sup> (plate 18), for example, is sufficiently strong to invite the beholder to attend to the dialogue between them even as they contemplate the whole. The beholder's actions with respect to the work can be seen as usurping the autonomy of the object as they determine its orientation and its import. Morris' Primary Structures similarly invite



Plate 18. Robert Rauschenberg. *Monogram*. 1955-9 Freestanding Combine  
42x64x64½"

the beholder to investigate their circumstances, though, unlike the surfeit of phenomena in Assemblages, such an investigation is prompted by a dearth of stimuli. Both the Primary Structures and Assemblages question the sufficiency of a purely visual perception of the art work. In both instances, the object before the beholder operates not in accord with Langer's principle of "semblance" but evinces its physical existence. Thus, Fried declares Morris' sculpture to be "literalist", concerned "not to defeat or suspend its own objecthood, but on the contrary to discover and project objecthood as such"<sup>88</sup> whilst Assemblage places 'the thing itself' rather than its representation within the work. There are distinctions between these modes of enquiry, but they both attempt to evade form by making the work contingent on the actions of the beholder with respect to the object before them. Where Kaprow develops the notion of the object as a provocation to be met by the beholder in his Happenings and Activities, Morris chooses to lessen the concern with the formal properties of the object by foregrounding its construction.

A concern with process is not best served by work that consists of immutable objects. The Primary Structures had played on the expectations of the beholder to generate a changing perception of what was a fixed object. Apparent in these structures was the commonplace nature of the materials and the way in which they were assembled, thwarting attempts to discern an informing principle in the work beyond the ineludible realisation of a particular shape. Working with felt, Morris assigns primacy to the material rather than the shape he intends to form; the resultant object arising from the negotiation between artist and material rather than the realisation of a predetermined end. Paradoxically, as Morris attempts to foreground the process of making rather than the ensuing product, signs of his endeavours are increasingly difficult to detect. The convolutions of the strips of felt

little exertion, or none at all. Though clearly influenced by Duchamp's 'Readymades', which give rise to the possibility that the art work might exist independent of the effort and skill expended on it by the artist, Morris nevertheless wishes to call attention to the relationship between the activity of the artist and the object before the beholder. This is evident not only in the *Box with the Sound of its Own Making* (a nine-inch walnut cube containing a three-hour tape recording of its construction)<sup>89</sup>, but also in the performance piece *Site*<sup>90</sup> (plate 19).

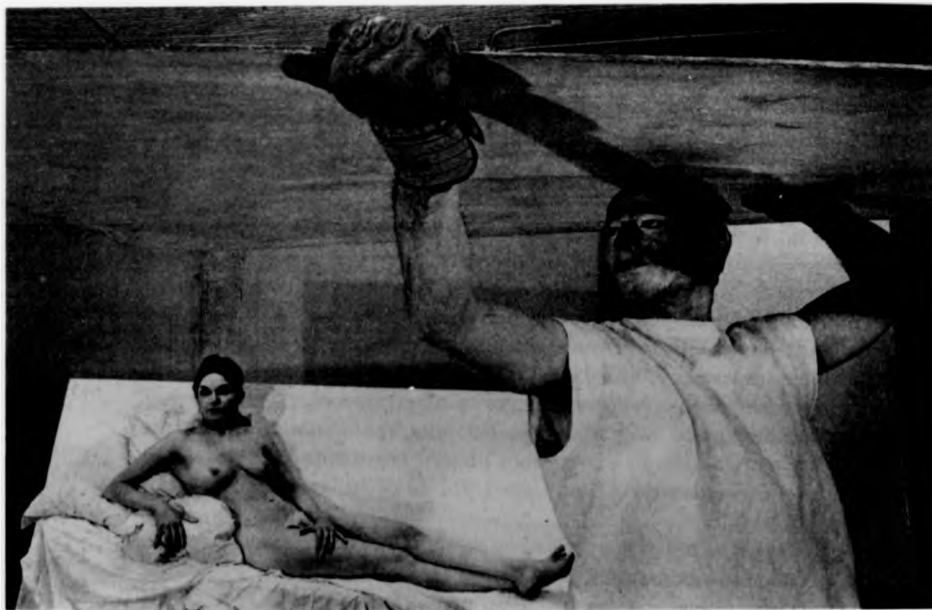


Plate 19. Robert Morris. *Site* Dance piece 1965

Alluding to the earlier *Box*, *Site* opens with the noise of hammering emerging from a box comprised of large construction panels. As the work progresses, Morris, wearing a mask, moves these panels around a white stage, finally revealing the artist Carolee Schneemann reclining on a couch in the manner of Manet's *Olympia*. Acknowledged as an act of defiance against the unspoken subjugation of women in

painting, Manet's work also marks a challenge to the contradiction that art critic John Berger observes in the production of such images:

On the one hand the individualism of the artist, the thinker, the patron, the owner: on the other hand, the person who is the object of their activities - the woman - treated as a thing or an abstraction.<sup>91</sup>

*Site* effects a break between the artist and the owner/holder. No longer conspiring with the beholder to oppress the subject, Morris' faceless worker seems as much a victim of an unjust system as does the reclining nude. However, if the work is reconsidered not as a means to an end (revealing Manet's painting) but as an activity, Morris' labour is no longer subservient to the object it produces but valid in its own right. In addition, the activity is not abstracted into a mystical undertaking removed from the commonplace endeavours of less skilled labourers, but is shown to be mundane. The humour evident in the revelation of the exquisitely realised Olympia at the conclusion of Morris' menial rearrangements foregrounds the expectation that the object exist apart from the work that it arises from. *Continuous Project* is an attempt by Morris to place the activity within the work without - as is the case with *Site* - inviting the beholder to consider the work in theatrical terms. In a recent interview, Morris suggests that his theatre pieces, because of their frontality, are closer to the work that Michael Fried defends than the object work that he criticises for being "theatrical":

In the theatre pieces you're in a more pictorial relationship to them than with the objects because you're outside of this thing totally; you're still, you're watching. In the objects you're in it, you're moving around, it doesn't keep its distance from you so it's almost strangely enough reversed; the 'theatre' pieces are more pictorial in [Fried's] sense.<sup>92</sup>

*Continuous Project* attempts to evade the physical fixity of the object without sacrificing the beholder's freedom to enter into the work. The mutability of the piece is enhanced by the raw materials that are its components - the earth, rubble, strips of wood and felt, in conjunction with the shovel and broom - that resist the sense of completeness that separates the autonomous art object from dependency on its circumstances. Even the feeling of abandonment that arises from Morris' earlier 'anti form' work (the roll of felt or the scatter pieces, for example) is tempered by the sense that the work is evolving and that to reduce it to the stimuli before the beholder at a particular moment is to fail to fully engage with it. It does not look toward a moment of resolution or climax, a trait one might detect in *Site*, which builds up to the unveiling of Olympia, nor is its potential encapsulated within the moment of apprehension. Freed from both the fixed form of the object and a narrative structure that would encapsulate the modifications to the work and provide a unified whole, *Continuous Project* would seem to be in accord with a definition of theatre provided by John Cage that acknowledges its mutability above all else: "Theatre is continually becoming that it is becoming."<sup>93</sup>

## Conclusion

---

'Unitary form' and 'anti form' would appear to be opposed to one another. Visually, the Primary Structures offer the beholder clearly defined shapes, whilst the felt pieces and earthworks abandon any possibility of recognition as familiar forms. The levelling effect of representing the works, perpetuated in magazines, catalogues and indeed here, is inescapable, but before the work points of convergence are evident that owe little to optical characteristics and more to the consistency of Morris' concerns. In the early work form is foregrounded to the extent that it masks any discernible content. Edges do not evoke



tension between, or dissipation of, forces emanating from an internal logic but rather are required to conform to the intended shape. Likewise, size, material and colour are determined by the need not to call attention to themselves but rather to most efficiently generate the intended shape. The object is not autonomous because its content does not seem to reside within its physical limits. Instead, the beholder actively and consciously seeks to imbue the object with content, thus becoming immersed in the terms by which the work operates. Without 'completing' the work, (for to do so would suggest that it is a conundrum to be resolved, whereas the simplicity of the structures is such that they challenge the beholder to discern the conundrum) the beholder nevertheless is invited to engage in a relationship with it that goes beyond the passive contemplation Michael Fried considers most appropriate in the presence of the autonomous art object. In his dismissal of the work of Morris and other 'literalist' sculptors, Fried perceptively alludes to the interdependence of beholder and object:

...that the beholder is confronted by literalist work within a situation that he experiences as *his* means that there is an important sense in which the work in question exists for him *alone*, even if he is not actually alone with the work at the time.<sup>94</sup>

If the Primary Structures succeeded in calling attention to form to the point where it ceased to operate within the work without the beholder being able to negotiate with it, their reliance on simplicity, monochromatic surfaces and lack of surface variation evolved into a nascent content which would allow the critic to assess them according to their conformity or divergence from an emerging norm. The essay 'Anti Form' is a response to this co-option of the earlier work. The felt work that Morris produces in this period is antithetical to the grey Primary Structures in respect of the realisation of the artist's intention. They

introduce the element of chance into the work, though only fitfully; the beholder is able to discern that the arrangement of felt before them is only one of an infinite number of arrangements, but cannot be assured that there is not 'more' to the work than they see before them without attending to an alternate arrangement of the same material (which they have no way of knowing is in all respects no different from the first). Complexity of form invites content to lodge within its convolutions, whether intentional or otherwise, in the manner of Rorschach's ink blots, and even the intervention of non-intention in the guise of gravitational pull does not ultimately enable the felt works to evade form. Their contribution toward this end would seem to be in marking a departure from work that realises a goal to that which is concerned with the preceding activity: Morris' concern with material is apparent in the Primary Structures, though it is foregrounded in the felt works. The static scatter pieces are a coherent illustration of Morris' concern with 'anti form', yet in their ability to 'represent' such a concept they ultimately slip into an affirmation of the centrality of form. With *Continuous Project Altered Daily*, Morris incorporates many of the elements that contribute to the particular character of his work - indeterminacy, primacy of materials, resistance to form - but does not produce a distinct object that illustrates these concerns. His work, tautologically, is his work, not the object that stands independent of any labour the artist may have contributed.

Though intended as a dismissal, Fried's contention that Morris' work approaches the condition of theatre provides a useful means of positioning the artist with respect to the other practitioners addressed in this work. That Fried does not declare the work to be theatre, but, instead, to operate on its periphery, is indicative of its ability to disrupt form. Morris very rarely provides an overtly theatrical frame for his objects<sup>95</sup>, yet because they are too obvious to be able to speak for

themselves (Primary Structures) or else too disparate to possess a unitary voice ("Anti Form") the beholder contextualises them, framing them in a space that they themselves inhabit as they explore the object. If the theatrical model is to be invoked, then it is not the interplay between performers and audience that persists between the object and the beholder but instead that between performers. As such, both exist *within* the work, which, in turn, is not simply the sum of both parties, nor even, additionally, the spatial and temporal circumstances in which they find themselves, but rather the interplay between these elements. As Eric Gibson reflects in 1985 on the artist's career, "it is the performance itself, rather than its material residue in created works of art, that is the principal artistic statement."<sup>96</sup> Regarded in this way, the art object is a provocation, or, in Baudrillard's terms, "that which allows one to play: a stake"<sup>97</sup>. Morris, primarily a creator of physical objects, attempts to bring this creative impulse into the work itself rather than offer up signs of its passage in the form of sculpture.

1 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from  
2 Philosophy in a New Key. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd,  
3 1953. p46.

4 As propounded in his essay "Modernist Painting." (see Greenberg,  
5 Clement. "Modernist Painting." Arts Yearbook, no.1, New York, 1961,  
6 reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) The New Art, revised version of  
7 1966 ed. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973. pp 66-77.)

8 see Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." Artforum, Vol.5, June 1967,  
9 pp.12-23. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York:  
10 E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968. pp 116-147.

11 The term acquired currency through its use as the title of an influential  
12 exhibition at the Jewish Museum, New York, in 1966. Curated by  
13 Kynaston McShine, the exhibition featured the work of forty-two British  
14 and American sculptors, including Robert Morris. (see McShine,  
15 Kynaston. Primary Structures. New York: Jewish Museum, 1966.)

16 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form.", Artforum, Vol.6 no.8 April 1968. pp  
17 33-5. The title of the essay is not Morris', but was supplied by the  
18 editors of Artforum. Morris' reluctance to 'formalise' the work by  
19 naming it is apparent in an exhibition he curated displaying tendencies  
20 suggested in the article, simply entitled "9 in a Warehouse" (Leo  
21 Castelli Warehouse, New York, 1968. see Kozloff, Max. "9 in a  
22 Warehouse." Artforum, Vol.7 no.6. February 1969. pp 38-42.)

23 Whether Minimalism proper, or "Postminimalism" as Pincus-Witten  
24 refers to a broad variety of work in his book of the same name,  
25 embracing not only painting and sculpture, but film, Body art, and  
26 Conceptual art. see Pincus-Witten, Robert. Postminimalism. New  
27 York: Out of London Press, Inc., 1977.

28 Colpitt, Frances. Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective. Seattle:  
29 University of Washington Press, 1990. p1

30 *ibid.*, p1

31 Craig-Martin, Michael. "Reflections on the 1960s and early '70s." Art  
32 Monthly, March 1988, cited in Tate Gallery, Liverpool. Minimalism,  
33 Liverpool: Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 1990. p8.

34 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." p34.

35 As Michael Craig-Martin notes, "Minimalism, with its implication of  
36 'almost nothing there' and, in Britain, because of the notoreity of the  
37 Carl Andre 'brick piece', has come to represent everything about  
38 contemporary art that makes many people (not just those that are  
39 uninterested in art) suspicious and hostile." (Craig-Martin, Michael.  
40 "The Art of Context." in Tate Gallery, Liverpool. Minimalism,  
41 Liverpool: Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 1990. p7.)

42 Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 1", Artforum, Vol.4  
43 February 1966. p44.

44 Philip Glass. Music in 12 Parts. 1971-74.

45 Yvonne Rainer. The Mind is a Muscle (later called Trio A). 1966.

46 Donald Judd, unpublished transcript of symposium at the Jewish  
47 Museum, New York, 1966, cited in Rose, Barbara. A New Aesthetic.  
48 Washington DC: Washington Gallery of Modern Art, 1967. p18 n2.

49 Glass, Philip. Music in 12 Parts - Parts 1 & 2. Virgin CA2010 (LP  
50 Record) 1974.

51 Perreault, John. "A Minimal Future? Union-Made." Arts Magazine,  
52 Vol.41 no.5, March 1967. p30.

- 18 Rainer, Yvonne. Yvonne Rainer: Work 1961-73. Halifax, Canada: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974. p63.
- 19 Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 1." p42-3.
- 20 All dimensions and descriptions are taken from Michael Compton and David Sylvester's book that accompanied an exhibition of Morris' work at the Tate Gallery 28 April - 6 June 1971. see Compton, Michael, and David Sylvester (eds.) Robert Morris. London: Tate Gallery, 1971. p35.
- 21 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form. pp.50-1.
- 22 Anthony Caro, Early One Morning, 1962. Painted aluminium and steel. 114 x 244 x 13in.
- 23 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form. p63.
- 24 *ibid.*, p45.
- 25 *ibid.*, p45.
- 26 *ibid.*, p140.
- 27 *ibid.*, p90.
- 28 see Krauss, Rosalind. Passages in Modern Sculpture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1977. pp 266-7.
- 29 Rosalind Krauss regards the floor pieces of Carl Andre as squeezing out internal space, leaving them with "no sense of depth or thickness, and therefore with no appearance of inside or centre", which she in turn compares with Stella's striped canvases though I think the comparison with Morris' mirrored cubes is equally applicable. (see Krauss, Rosalind Passages in Modern Sculpture pp 271-2.)
- 30 *ibid.*, p270.
- 31 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form. p32.
- 32 *ibid.*, p39.
- 33 *ibid.*, pp 47-8.
- 34 Greenberg, Clement. "Recentness of Sculpture." from the exhibition catalogue American Sculpture of the Sixties. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1967. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968. p183.
- 35 Greenberg, Clement. "Modernist Painting." p68.
- 36 *ibid.*, p69.
- 37 Greenberg, Clement. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch." Partisan Review. Vol vi no 5. Fall 1939. pp 34-49. reprinted in Frascina, Francis (ed.) Pollock and After. London: Harper and Row, 1985. p23.
- 38 Greenberg, Clement. "Modernist Painting." p70.
- 39 Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland, whom Greenberg later labelled as Post-Painterly Abstractionists.
- 40 Lyotard, Jean-François. "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" in Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984. p81.
- 41 Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture Part 1." p 42.
- 42 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form. p88.

- 43 Robert Morris. *Untitled*. 1965. Plexiglass mirror on wood, four pieces each 28x28x28in.
- 44 see Morris, Robert. *Robert Morris Mirror Works 1961-78*. New York: Leo Castelli Gallery, 1979. for an illustration of these and an introductory piece by the artist.
- 45 Compton, Michael and David Sylvester (eds.) *Robert Morris*. p16
- 46 Kaprow, Allan, and Barbara Berman. *Allan Kaprow*. Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1967. p11.
- 47 Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 2." *Artforum*. Vol 5 no 2. October 1966. p22.
- 48 see O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Part II: The eye and the spectator." *Artforum*. April 1976. in which the author draws attention to the way in which the gallery space has become charged with significance.
- 49 Robert Morris. *Corner Piece*. 1964. Painted plywood. 78 x108 in.
- 50 Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 2." p21.
- 51 *ibid.*, p22.
- 52 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." p34.
- 53 Robert Morris. *Pine Portal*. 1961. Wood. circa 96x48x12in.
- 54 There is also the ironic echoing of the frame as a portal, which usually evokes a sense of grandeur and enormity, contradicted by its realisation in commonplace pine.
- 55 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." p34.
- 56 Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." p145.
- 57 *ibid.*, p145.
- 58 O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube Part 2." p33.
- 59 Robert Morris. *Gas Station*. 16mm film, silent colour 33min. 1969.
- 60 Robert Morris. *Untitled* (referred to as "L beams") 1965 & 1967. Painted Plywood. two or three pieces each 96x96x24in.
- 61 As is the case in the installation photograph in Compton, Michael and David Sylvester. *Robert Morris*. p42.
- 62 Robert Morris. *Untitled*. 1966. Painted plywood. 48x48x96in.
- 63 Robert Morris. *Untitled*. 1968. Expanded aluminium. 36x144x144in.
- 64 Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." p146.
- 65 Robert Morris. *Untitled*. 1968. Aluminium. nine units each 36x36x36in.
- 66 Robert Morris. *Untitled*. 1968/9. Aluminium. 24x288x288in.
- 67 The structural function of girders, as means of support, also enters into the work. In addition, compare the further lessening of the sense of individual pieces in another girder piece (*Untitled*. 1967. Aluminium. 66x306x402in.) through their being bolted together.
- 68 Other pieces produced by Morris are more evidently concerned with gravity though not so alarmingly as some of Richard Serra's works such as *One-Ton Prop* or *Stacked Steel Slabs*.
- 69 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." p34.
- 70 *ibid.*, p35.

- 71 In 1968 Donald Judd was given a one-man exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art. The Hague held an exhibition entitled "Minimal Art", and the work of Morris, Judd and Andre were positioned in relation to the previous generation's canonical artists, the Abstract Expressionists Pollock, Mark Rothko, and Clyfford Still in "The Art of The Real" at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.
- 72 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." p35.
- 73 A number of the plywood pieces were remade in steel, underlying the unspecific nature of the material
- 74 Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." p35.
- 75 Robert Morris. *Untitled* 1968 Grey felt. two pieces each 1/2 in thick
- 76 Robert Morris. *Untitled*. 1968 Grey felt 1/2 x 72 x 108 in.
- 77 Richard Serra. *Thirty-Five Feet of Lead Rolled Up*. 1968 Lead approximately 24 x 5in.
- 78 Marcel Duchamp. *Three Stoppages* Morris paid homage to Duchamp's chance measurement in an early work (*Three Rulers (Yardsticks)* 1963/72. Bronze) comprising three rulers hung from a horizontal bar, each divided into thirty "inches", though the scale of them differing so that they are of dissimilar lengths
- 79 "In one case, days of work failed to achieve quite the desired effect, which was obtained only when Morris himself arrived for the opening and gave the work a few well-placed kicks" (Karmel, Pepe. "The Evolution of the Felt Works " in Morris, Robert. Robert Morris: Mirror Works 1961-78 New York: Leo Castelli Gallery, 1979 p43.)
- 80 ibid p52.
- 81 Though the works included earth as one of many disparate elements, Marcia Tucker's use of the term "earthworks" is not to be confused with the large-scale pieces by artists including Morris, Robert Smithson and Douglas more commonly associated with the term (see Tucker, Marcia Robert Morris New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1970 p43 )
- 82 Robert Morris, quoted in Tucker, Marcia Robert Morris p43
- 83 Robert Morris. *Earthwork*. 1968. Earth, grease, peat, steel, copper, aluminium, brass, zinc, felt approximately 24x60x84in
- 84 Joseph Beuys. *The End of the Twentieth Century*. 1983-85. 31 basalt stones with clay filled cavity and cone shaped insert wrapped in felt. Overall size variable
- 85 Kaprow, Allan. "The Shape of the Art Environment: How antiform is 'Anti Form'?" Artforum, no. 6. Summer 1968. p33.
- 86 Robert Morris. *Continuous Project Altered Daily*. 1969. Earth, water, paper, grease, plastic wood.
- 87 Robert Rauschenberg. *Monogram* 1955-9. Freestanding Combine 42x64x64 1/2 in.
- 88 Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." p120
- 89 Robert Morris. *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* 1961. Walnut box, speaker, and tape recorder
- 90 Robert Morris. *Site* Dance piece 1965
- 91 Berger, John. Ways of Seeing Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972. p62
- 92 Interview by the author with Robert Morris, New York City 4th November 1992.

- 93 Cage, John. "Experimental Music: Doctrine." in Cage, John. Silence.  
Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1961 p14
- 94 Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." p140
- 95 An exception being his early work *Column*: "A gray plywood column,  
two feet square and eight feet high, stands on an otherwise empty  
stage. For three and a half minutes the column remains erect.  
Suddenly the column falls to the floor. Another three and a half  
minutes pass without action. Finally the stage lights black out, marking  
the end of the performance. (Berger, Maurice Labyrinths p47.)
- 96 Gibson, Eric. "Art: The Real Robert Morris." The New Criterion.  
March 1985 p56.
- 97 Baudrillard, Jean. The Ecstasy of Communication trans Bernard &  
Caroline Schutze. New York: Semiotext(e), 1988 p69.



Where Robert Morris strove to pare away extraneous elements from the Primary Structures to reveal the third dimension of sculpture, Allan Kaprow, trained as a painter, found that the canvas might attain depth through a process of addition. Initially a means of exceeding the limitations of painting through the introduction of more variable, less predetermined elements, such addition presaged the pursuit of variability itself. In the early Happenings, the formal constraints of the canvas are rejected in favour of a theatrical model. The unfamiliarity and freedom of this model from a fine artist's perspective, coupled with a desire to unite artist and beholder in an active participation in the work's formation generates works that whilst indebted to both visual and performative antecedents can not be said to fall exclusively within the remit of either. The later Happenings are considered as moves to eliminate even the imposition of a frame of the work's own construction, as that which is and is not the work becomes increasingly difficult to discern. Notions of a work as a formally distinct entity give way to situations that are distinguishable only if considered as something one actively engages in or performs. Lastly, the Activities look toward the consideration of form as a quality not limited to objects but apparent in behaviour. This results in works that seek out form in commonplace social interaction, their accessibility facilitating modification at the point of emergence.

---

### Expansion

---

Allan Kaprow studied with Hans Hofmann, regarded as the father-figure of the New York school of painting during the post-war years.<sup>1</sup> Kaprow's practical ability was coupled with a grounding in art

theory that culminated in a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University. At the forefront of artists using new materials and ways of working, Kaprow nevertheless underscores all his work with an informed theoretical approach. The tension between practical and theoretical concerns is evident in the widely differing work of two artists Kaprow drew inspiration from during the early fifties. He is undoubtedly influenced by Jackson Pollock's action paintings, which he first saw in 1949, and regarded as "mostly an environmental activity" <sup>2</sup>, whilst his choice of Piet Mondrian as the subject of his M.A. thesis suggests the notion of environment as a response to the limitations of figurative work in comparison with abstract art. Mondrian makes the distinction between the figurative and non-figurative in his essay, "Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art":

Non-figurative art brings to an end the ancient culture of art...the culture of particular form is approaching its end. The culture of determined relations has begun.<sup>3</sup>

The elevation of relations over form is echoed in a perceptive comment on the dissimilarity between the *collages* of Picasso and the *Assemblages* and combines of the late 1950s. Edward Lucie-Smith observes that where the Cubists had used the technique to explore the differences between representation and reality, the post-war generation had developed

a means of creating works of art almost entirely from pre-existent elements, where the artist's contribution was to be found more in making the links between objects, putting them together, than in making objects *ab initio*.<sup>4</sup>

In calling attention to the relationship or links within a work, *Assemblages* echo Mondrian's disavowal of particular form, as the

pieces shift from being regarded in relation to the world they represent to standing as objects in themselves. Though Mondrian's position is underscored by a belief in the indivisibility of art disciplines<sup>5</sup>, his emphasis on painting's plastic qualities, "*composition, colour, and line* and not the representation *as representation*"<sup>6</sup>, invites consideration of the work as of the same order as other objects in the world. Plastic art looks "towards the end of art as a *thing separated from our surrounding environment, which is the actual plastic reality*"<sup>7</sup>. The coloured planes of Mondrian's *Broadway Boogie-Woogie*<sup>8</sup> are to be considered not as forms, but relationships, denying the particularity of appearance in favour of showing "the *process of life* that is reflected in the plastic expression of art"<sup>9</sup>. In an interview with Richard Kostelanetz, Kaprow talks of Mondrian as an artist employing the visual to attain the experiential;

I conceived of him as a philosophical artist -a painter who used painting to destroy painting, in order to arrive at an essentially mystical sense of awareness.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, Jackson Pollock's "action-paintings", such as *Lavender Mist*<sup>11</sup> (see plate 1), in rejecting the *representation* of three dimensions that characterised the Cubist canvas, had called attention to the work's surface, which, spattered with paint and other matter, might be regarded as entering the gallery space.

Both Pollock and Mondrian are most closely associated with their abstract work, though their approaches differ radically. Pollock's description of his working method suggests it is less a means to an end than a highly charged emotional state of which the canvas remains as a testament;

When I am *in* the painting I'm not aware of what I'm doing. It is only after a sort of 'get acquainted' period that I see what I have been about. I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through.<sup>12</sup>

In contrast, Mondrian's compositions bear witness to the intellect purging the canvas of extraneous matter;

The appearance of nature is far stronger and much more beautiful than any *imitation* of it can ever be; if we wish to reflect nature, fully, we are *compelled* to find *another* plastic. Precisely for the sake of nature, of reality, we avoid its natural appearance.<sup>13</sup>

Kaprow might be regarded as employing the dynamism and expansiveness of Pollock matched with Mondrian's effort to encourage perception of the work *in* the world rather than as a reflection of it. The consequence of their meeting in the work of Allan Kaprow is a shift away from painting conceived as a fixed form within which progress appears as the changing of rules governing the representation of material. In place of this, the painting's physical properties are elevated to the status of subject matter, calling attention to something verifiably present rather than evoking something that is absent: variability can then only arise by altering the physical properties of the painting. Unlike the Cubist collages, additions to the flat, rectangular plane of the painting did not conspire with the canvas to create an ironic *trompe l'oeil* in which real depth is obscured by the illusion of a flat surface but instead resulted in the necessity of the canvas to the painter's task being called into question. Assemblages and Environments call attention to their status as objects *per se*, as opposed to representations of other objects. The contextualising nature of the field is superfluous, as the work is positioned with respect to the same spatial co-ordinates as the beholder.

The move from the pictorial space of the canvas to real space is considered in Kaprow's book, *Assemblage, Environments and Happenings* as one that entailed "relinquishing the goal of picture making entirely"<sup>14</sup>. As the matter attached to the canvas protruded further from the wall in the combines of an artist such as Robert Rauschenberg, the frame failed to enclose the work, having no means to encompass its depth. Rauschenberg's *Bed* <sup>15</sup>(see plate 20) explicitly acknowledges its link to painting, but this is not a constraining factor.



Plate 20. Robert Rauschenberg *Bed* 1955 Combine painting 74" x 3'

Mounted on a wall, Rauschenberg's combine painting incorporates an actual bed to which paint has been applied, resulting in an object that invites consideration as both a representation and the thing itself. Presented with an object encroaching into their space, the beholder is invited to determine her position with respect to it, rather than aligning herself with the work at a suitable distance from the wall on which it is hung. The physically present bed in Rauschenberg's combine not only embraces the three-dimensionality of sculpture but carries with it a functional value "such that its nature is predicated as much on the actions of the individual toward it as any visual and physical adherence to the form of a bed. Though the possibility of the beholder interacting with the work in ways other than a passive acknowledgement of its status as art can only be conceptualised with respect to the wall-mounted *Bed*, later *Assemblages* and *Environments* invited the beholder to rearrange material, walk through spaces and contribute in other ways to the art work.

Kaprow notes that those *Assemblages* that retain the painting's placement against a wall (he cites his own *Wall*<sup>16</sup> as indicative of this orientation) are less successful than those suspended from the ceiling or situated on the floor<sup>17</sup>, because of their reversion to the "field" of painting. Taking the example of a primitive cave marking in the shape of a bison, Kaprow argues that the imposition of the field fundamentally alters the perception of the thing. Previously, the painting of the animal was experienced either

as real substance in real space (having magical powers) or the image was the entire "picture"...When next a horizon line was drawn under a cow, the separation of image from environment occurred like a logical thunderbolt, and thereafter painting (and man) could never be the same. Painting had become symbol rather than power, i.e.,

something which *stood for* experience rather than *acting directly upon it*.<sup>18</sup>

Later works by Rauschenberg move away from the wall and the strict imposition of a figure upon a ground, in the case of *Monogram* (see plate 18, page 82) adopting a playful, ironic attitude toward the deposed canvas. The beholder is confronted with a canvas placed on its back on the floor in the centre of the room. Astride it stands a stuffed goat with a car tyre round its middle. Its form is undecideable, mediating between a surreal *tableau vivant* - in which a goat has violated an art work and in turn appears to be the victim of some assault upon itself - and a bizarre hybrid work, incorporating painting, sculpture and "ready-made" objects. Without an apparent form to orientate the beholder, it invites apprehension from differing perspectives. The beholder might look down onto the surface of the canvas as if it were an upended painting, or look across towards it from any number of positions around its perimeter. The beholder might chose to accept a particular perspective from which to regard the work as most conducive to understanding its import or because it is pleasing to the eye, but it is a perspective arising from the choice of the beholder rather than being inscribed within the form of the work. Many of Kaprow's Assemblages implicitly or explicitly invite the beholder to engage with them in a more active way. In developing *Wall* into the box-shaped *Kiosk*<sup>19</sup> (see plate 21), Kaprow not only broke with a frontal orientation, but also presaged the mutability of the object. *Wall* and *Kiosk* are both derived from a number of textured panels, having mirrors, fruit, paint and other matter on their surfaces; the former arranged in a line, the latter creating an enclosed box. The works are described as consisting of rearrangeable panels, and the existence of two such rearrangements invites consideration of the piece not as an immutable object but as something whose form is transient. The works look back to a prior rearrangement



Plate 21. Allan Kaprow. *Kiosk* 1957-59. Rearrangeable panels (Assemblage)

and forward to a subsequent one; they are both the consequence of, and stimulus for, an activity, rather than a fixed entity.

Kaprow's *Penny Arcade*<sup>20</sup> introduces mutability into the work in a more direct manner. It is a multi-sensory Assemblage, having illuminated light bulbs emerging from its surface and an accompanying assortment of sounds. Not only is the beholder's aural perception stimulated, but the work is overtly concerned with time, which is necessary to experience the variation in sounds. John Cage had considered the only



property common to all sounds to be duration, which led to his "silent" pieces and subsequent works such as *Water Music* (1952)<sup>21</sup> that incorporated visual elements, their "silence" being equally as valid as that of the unplayed piano of 4'33". Kaprow, likewise, declared that there was "no apparent theoretical limit to what may be used"<sup>22</sup> in *Assemblages* and *Environments*, criticising those artists who, whilst employing new materials tended "to sugar-coat everything by recasting it in older molds"<sup>23</sup>. This is in contrast to Kaprow's sense of appropriation; incorporating sound-producing objects, he allows them their voice, rather than have them remain mute as if only representations of the actual object.

Having considered *Assemblages* and *Environments* as essentially the same, distinguishable only by size<sup>24</sup>, Kaprow suggests that differences arise not from the formal properties of the object but instead are predicated on the actions of the beholder: *Assemblages* "may be handled or walked around, while *Environments* must be walked into".<sup>25</sup> *Words*<sup>26</sup> (see plate 22), following on from previous environments such as *An Apple Shrine*<sup>27</sup> that foregrounded the ambulatory nature of the form, is characterised by a wish to detain the beholder. *Words* was presented in two adjoining rooms of the Smolin Gallery, New York in September 1962. In one room were hundreds of words written on cards and tacked to every available space on the walls, excepting that given over to seven looped towel dispensers having words stencilled over the endless belts of material. The second, much smaller room had blank walls. The piece was "bathed with blinking 42nd Street lights"<sup>28</sup> and accompanied by the continual sound of (pre-recorded) whispered and shouted words. On entering the space, the beholder is confronted by placards suspended from the ceiling encouraging their involvement; "ROLL THE ROLLS!", for example, imploring them to turn the seven towel-loops to create a different juxtaposition of words. Other "tasks" included



Plate 22. Allan Kaprow. *Words Environment*. Smolin Gallery, New York September 11-22, 1962

rearranging the existing cards on the walls or creating one's own, or retiring to the small room and chalking messages on its bare surfaces. The work resists the frontality assumed by painting and sculpture, as the beholder cannot be outside of its frame looking in; there is no optimum position where the work can be seen in its entirety. To view the work from any one position - reducing it to an image - is to construct consciously a frame that conveys one's own condition (the specific time and place of viewing) rather than the totality of the object.

Previously, Assemblages had incorporated sound or objects whose nature changed over the duration of the event. George Brecht's *Blair* (see plate 23), for example, included a tear-off day-by-day calendar and a working thermometer<sup>29</sup>. These elements augmented the mutable nature of works that, frequently shunning a frontal orientation, had changed with the movement of the beholder around them. Brecht's piece displays two characteristics Kaprow increasingly built into his

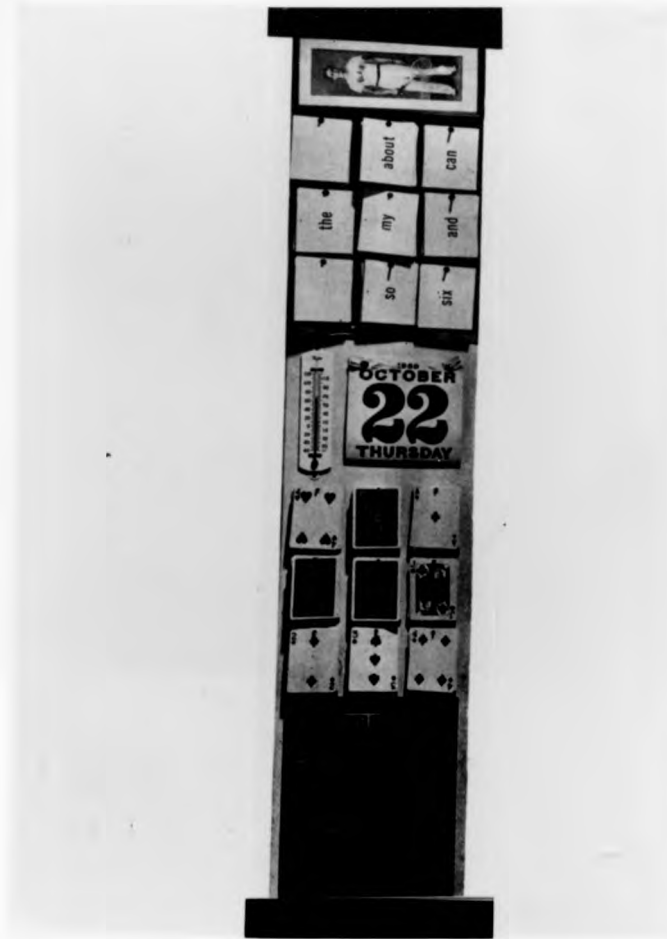


Plate 23 George Brecht. *Blair*. 1959. 5'x1½'x2". Rearrangeable Assemblage.

works, change and chance; the tear-off calendar alters in a way and at intervals that are regular and predictable (change), whilst the thermometer, theoretically, if not practically, given the efforts in some galleries to keep room temperature at a constant level, will alter its reading due to circumstances beyond the control of the individual (chance). With an Environment such as *Words*, Kaprow not only incorporates elements of change such as the continuous sound of spoken words and the differing combinations of words available by

manipulating the towel dispenser, but also, by encouraging visitors to the space to add their own words, allows chance to enter the work. The work looks toward the theatrical in that the object is not fixed, but consists of the actions of those within its frame and is therefore in a continual state of flux. Kaprow's instructions to the beholder might be viewed as a "score", comprising directions to be followed. In altering the space, the beholder could be seen as "performing", though without a discernible audience.

Kaprow's early interventions are characterised by expansion, from the first tentative additions to the canvas to its relegation to one of innumerable discernible entities constituting the object. This expansion proceeds in three interrelated ways - the increased space occupied by the work, the greater variety of materials employed by the work and the enlargement of the terms by which the work operates. It is the last of these that both marks the most radical departure from the autonomous object. It acknowledges the presence of the beholder as an element in the construction of the work, and suggests that expansion alone cannot evade form but only alter its composition. Though the rigid parameters by which painting operates are replaced by seemingly limitless possibilities, the production of an object by an artist to place before the beholder for her consumption remains the underlying premise of the art work. Whilst the activities prompted by *Words* invite consideration of the work in terms of process rather than product, the tasks performed all looked toward re-forming an object (the physical environment). As with the painting on the gallery wall, *Words* was a provocation to the individual to respond in a certain manner. Where the painting invited a respectful contemplation, *Words* expected the beholder to rearrange its constituent parts; to behave toward one with the response expected of the other would be considered inappropriate. Having literally allowed the beholder into the work and into its continuing formation, Kaprow's

*Words* offers the possibility of participation that is not fully realised. In *Environmental Theatre*, theatre director Richard Schechner writes that participation occurred in his work when "the play stopped being a play and became a social event -when spectators felt that they were free to enter the performance as equals"<sup>30</sup>. The inequality in *Words* arises from the limitless possibilities the beholder brings with them into the space confronting an insentient object, to which their actions are subservient. Though it is probable that the ease with which the discursive loses its meaning and ability to effect change is a central element of the work, it is a disenfranchisement visited on those in the space in the furtherance of the object's emergence. In *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*<sup>31</sup> (see plate 24), Kaprow attempts to address this imbalance by reconsidering the beholder more as a participant in the formation of the work rather than as an element of variability within a predetermined structure.

## Participation

---

*18 Happenings in 6 Parts* was presented in New York in October 1959. The piece took place in a gallery divided by plastic walls into three rooms, each with chairs arranged so that the audience sat facing differing directions. A letter was sent out to various people in New York informing them of the forthcoming production and suggesting that their contribution would be significant, inviting them to

collaborate with the artist, Mr Allan Kaprow, in making these events take place....As one of the seventy-five persons present, you will become a part of the happenings; you will simultaneously experience them.<sup>32</sup>

Before the piece commenced programmes were handed out, providing the following information;

The performance is divided into six parts. Each part contains three happenings which occur at once. The beginning and end of each will be signalled by a bell. At the end of the performance two strokes of the bell will be heard.<sup>33</sup>

In between parts, the audience, who were at all times clearly delineated from the performers, were instructed to move to a different room. The "Happenings" included a woman standing motionless pointing at the floor, a slide show, readings, musicians playing and painters painting. Where the beholder might, over a period of time, satisfy themselves that they had accumulated all the sensory information arising from a free standing Assemblage by altering their vantage point, the simultaneous occurrence of three separate events in *18 Happenings* frustrated any attempt to know the work in its entirety. The beholder was



Plate 24. Rehearsal for *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*.

not allowed to ignore the activities in the other rooms but rather experienced them in a fragmented fashion, catching glimpses of movement through the translucent plastic and hearing snatches of music and speech over and in between the sounds produced in their own room. In addition, because the painters were making their strokes on unprimed canvas, one painting straight lines, the other circles, one on the front of the material in one room, the other on the reverse in another, the activity and the result were simultaneously apparent.

The diversity of activities served to reinforce the divide between those attending and those occupying the roles of poet, painter and actor, unified by the common denominator, "performer". Though the status of performer and audience were seemingly polarised into that of producer and consumer respectively, both were united in having to participate in the work's construction. Kaprow acknowledges as much, citing as the final entry in the accompanying Cast of Participants "The visitors - who sit in various chairs"<sup>34</sup>. Those invited to the work are assigned a function that, whilst passive in comparison to those of the artists, is nonetheless more active than simply acknowledging the existence of an object. The beholder's conventional role as consumer is further frustrated by the ambivalence of form. The precise "score" has a strong internal logic, evident in the following segment of the instructions for "Person 1" in "Room 1 Set 1":

...walks slowly along corridor (ahead of those going to Room 2), stops at entrance 5", walks slowly, in a straight line, eyes ahead, to within 3 feet of the person seated opposite, stops here for 7", turns around for 2"...<sup>35</sup>

The informing principle behind these actions is unavailable to the beholder who, amidst an ostensibly theatrical environment, is presented with a series of seemingly discontinuous actions. The failure to provide

discernible links between one occurrence and the next not only marks the work as mediating between painting - possessed of a "continuous and entire presentness"<sup>36</sup> - and theatre - defined by Susanne Langer as "a present filled with its own future"<sup>37</sup> - but invites the beholder to adopt their own position with respect to the work. The beholder may choose to impose an ill-fitting, pre-existing form, marshalling the experience into an essentially visual whole, as one might apprehend the work of Robert Wilson, or else generate a narrative that orders the disparate parts; in either case, form is not indivisibly bound to the work but is seen to arise as a consequence of the beholder coming into contact with what the artist has provided. As Kaprow suggests in his letter of invitation, the work offers "some engaging situations"<sup>38</sup> yet whereas, according to Langer, "in the theatre we perceive an ominous situation and see that some far-reaching action must grow out of it"<sup>39</sup>, here the beholder is placed in a position to determine what, if anything, might evolve from the playing out of the work. As with the expansion of the field in painting, engagement with participation not only exceeds the limitations of existing form but, more significantly, disrupts the notion that form resides exclusively within the object.

Kaprow's subsequent Happenings move toward the determination of form being placed within the reach of those participating in the art work. In the absence of any immediate precursors<sup>40</sup>, *18 Happenings*, though it resisted form, could not help but display characteristics that would crystallise into a notion of what a "Happening" was. In *Assemblage, Environments and Happenings*, Kaprow sets out seven "rules of thumb" that might distinguish a Happening;

(A) The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct, as possible.



(B) Therefore, the source of themes, materials, actions, and the relationships between them are to be derived from any place or period *except* from the arts, their derivatives, and their milieu.

(C) The performance of a Happening should take place over several widely spaced, sometimes moving and changing locales.

(D) Time, which follows closely on space considerations, should be variable and discontinuous.

(E) Happenings should be performed once only.

(F) It follows that audiences should be eliminated entirely.

(G) The composition of a Happening proceeds exactly as in *Assemblage and Environments*, that is, it is evolved as a collage of events in certain spans of time and in certain spaces.<sup>41</sup>

Kaprow's first Happening falls some way short of the criteria set out above; it consciously marks the parameters by which it might be known, not only in its setting in an art gallery but through the division of parts by the sounding of a bell. It draws heavily from the arts through its inclusion of painters and musicians and was performed daily for a week before an audience. In acknowledging the evolution of the form, Kaprow observes that "the use of standard performance conventions from the very start tended to truncate the implications of the art."<sup>42</sup> The most fundamental development from the first Happening to the time of writing the guidelines concerned evading performance conventions through the removal of the audience. To advance the Happening from its adherence to a theatrical model, Kaprow found it necessary to work in a context where those involved might meet without consciously or otherwise dividing themselves into performers and audience, to

ritualise a mix of lifelike elements and fantasy, reject the staging area, and invite a number of people to take part in it, explaining the plan in a spirit of ceremony.<sup>43</sup>

In this he does not go as far as European artists engaged in Happenings, such as Wolf Vostell and Jean-Jacques Lebel, who could draw on an indigenous wealth of ancient ceremony and ritual, refracted through the culture of the continent. Lebel's *Funeral Ceremony of the Anti-Proces*<sup>44</sup>, an abrasive meeting of Catholicism and, amongst others, the Marquis de Sade amidst the regal palaces of Venice<sup>45</sup> evokes a tradition that can only be quoted self-consciously by American exponents of the medium. In contrast, the Happenings of Kaprow, along with those of Claes Oldenburg, Jim Dine and other Americans draw on the emerging Pop sensibility of the time. Kaprow's suggestion that Happenings look to any source for inspiration *except* the arts accords with the elevation of the mass-produced over the unique in the subject matter of Pop artists. In an essay on Pop Art, Edward Lucie-Smith is of the opinion that the subject matter of these artists foregrounds a concern with function over form;

Many objects - a typewriter, a telephone, a vacuum cleaner, a television set - are things we think of in a way which is almost entirely abstract, in terms of the services they provide. Works of art are feeling the effects of this attitude as well: they are becoming performances or functions, rather than things.<sup>46</sup>

Robert Morris' sculptures being considered as performances find their corollary in Kaprow's 'performances' reconceived as functions, means to an end not necessarily contained or even alluded to in the work itself. The move toward the functional emerges as the form becomes less evident, as is the case with *Fluids*<sup>47</sup>,

*Fluids* is a single event done in many places over a three-day period. It consists simply in building huge, blank, rectangular ice structures 30 feet long, 10 feet wide and eight feet high.<sup>48</sup>

A considerable amount of energy is expended to produce something transient, and although photographs documenting the piece

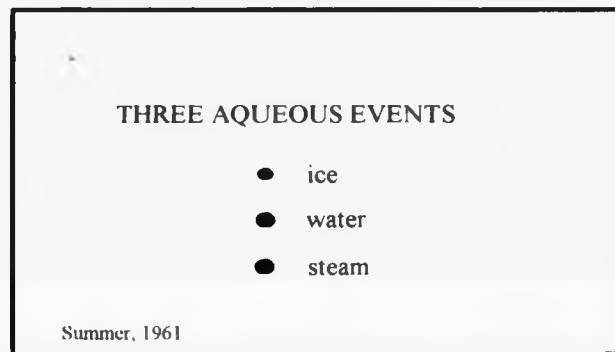


fig. 6 Three Aqueous Events. George Brecht . Summer, 1961

exist, it invites consideration as an activity rather than a finished product. Looking back on the work, Kaprow felt that it was a comment on city planning, a realisation that came through doing the activity rather than being determined before or after its execution.<sup>49</sup> As such, the import of the work is not the preserve of those standing outside of it, hoping to address it as a totality, but accessible to those engaged in carrying out Kaprow's instructions. Early Happenings consisted of an explicit score generated by Kaprow and followed by the performers, and a partial one, in the sense of instructions given by the artist, followed by the audience, and augmented by falling back on patterns of behaviour honed by attendance at other art activities.

*Orange*<sup>50</sup>, a Happening realised in March 1964, was scored for 400 travellers in an old citrus warehouse. While most of the participants were travellers, some were assigned specific roles; policeman, drivers,

girl in a bikini, violent man, etc. All had been given instructions so that attention was directed more toward the *doing* of the activity than a passive attending to what it might be. The majority of the participants - the travellers without assigned roles - pass through the space engaging in a variety of activities; squeezing an orange and drinking the juice, laying flowers on a girl in a bath full of orange juice, adding lengths of string to a spaghetti totem. Where Assemblages and Combines had taken the commonplace and called attention to it through juxtaposition - the activity of the artist - here it is the actions of the participants that instigates their reconsideration of the mundane in the work. What begins as a totality - the score - is fragmented by the differing ways it comes into being through the experiences of the individual participants. Kaprow's role, however, remains foremost, because of the specific nature of this score; thus, while individual accounts of the participants differ, they concur sufficiently to regard the artist as the unifying or enabling element. By collating the various accounts it is possible to approximate the score, to fix a point of origin or informing principle, even if no one individual can experience the whole.

In Kaprow's Happenings there is a move toward the dissolution of the artist's role in order that the chance elements of the performance - those things that consciously emulate the unpredictability of life - can be regarded as such, rather than springing from an overriding strategy. The presence of Kaprow within the work as a *participant* can be seen as a means of further distancing himself from the idea of the artist delivering the object fully-formed into the world for the beholder to respond to in an appropriate manner. If his participation is regarded as part of his role as the creator of the piece, then the work does not have a separate existence as an object - either the score or the performance - but instead can be seen as a process undergone by the artist. Regarded in this manner, the contribution of other participants is that of enabling the

artist to undergo this process - though the stimulus belongs to Kaprow, it remains in suspension until such time as others are brought in to realise it. The scores for the earlier works have built-in dissonances and irregularities - the woman making the spaghetti totem in *Orange*, the strawberry-jam-covered car in *Household*<sup>51</sup> - inviting the participant to assign the piece artistic intent emanating from the artist. The status of the beholder is critical to an understanding of the nature of the work; properly integrated into "the spirit of ceremony" she might consider what Susanne Langer refers to as the "strangeness" or "otherness" of the work of art<sup>52</sup> as that which distinguishes those participating from those outside the activity. Unable to engage with the invitations made by the work, the very same dissonances compound a sense of alienation between gifted artist and frustrated beholder.

Though Kaprow works toward the elimination of the audience - and by implication the performer, as all involved become participants - he seems reluctant to accept the implications this has on the status of the activity, its subsequent existence and those participating. Thus, when he states that

...the artist need not be the only one responsible for a creative action. While he may decide that only he can alter a piece as he sees fit during a period of time, he may also see a value in having nature or other artists with their different backgrounds and tastes contribute to its changes afterward. Using an extreme logic, this could imply that anything may be art and anyone may be an artist, but in plain fact it only extends the right of sensitive perception and creative activity to those who wish to respond appropriately, and artists usually proffer this invitation with discretion.<sup>53</sup>

he requires a fixed notion of the artist (and therefore art) to determine what is an appropriate response, and the discretionary invitation to creative activity is clearly intended to restrict the opportunities for other participants. In one sense an impasse is reached, as the moment an artist declares herself as such, a rift occurs between them and those to whom the declaration is made. What is implicit in the statement is the lack of audience, which points to the possibility of an all-embracing condition, approaching Beuys' belief that 'ART = MAN', but held back by adherence to an aesthetic, the "sensitive perception" that reintroduces a passive spectator. Carolee Schneemann regards the element of concordance as fundamental to Kaprow's Happenings - she observes that the "audience/participant must agree to his procedures"<sup>54</sup> - implying that there is a guiding intention (the artist's) to which all else is subservient. While the total elimination of the artist's intent can only be hypothesised - it would require the elimination of the role of the artist, or of the artist *per se*, a proposition explored in two dissimilar ways in the work of Joseph Beuys and Chris Burden - works such as George Brecht's *Three Window Events* (see fig. 2) and *Three Aqueous Events* (fig. 6) move toward this state. Both of these pieces, which consist of a small card with words that may be taken to be instructions or things in themselves, are cited frequently in Kaprow's writings. Originally mailed to friends of the artist, they subsequently became collected within a boxed set comprising some 100 scores (dependent on which edition one had) and referred to collectively as *Water Yam*. A score for an early Kaprow Happening, however diverse and random its realisation, still requires the beholder to mentally or physically realise its instructions, which, because of their generally complex nature, cannot be jettisoned once the activity is under way, nor does the particularity of the score itself encourage deviation from its course. Brecht's pieces are only instructions should the beholder wish to regard them as such - and the ways in which they may be realised are so diverse that a collation of accounts of the piece would be unlikely to point back toward an point of

origin - they can equally be statements, and in the case of the window piece, in which there are only two events, a conundrum, leading towards its dissolution.

Both during the phase of expansion and the participation in the early Happenings, Kaprow's attempts to generate work that might take on an existence independent of the art context from which it had sprung can be seen to founder on the density and specificity of the materials employed. Kaprow initially chose to fill his work with the multifarious objects, sights and sounds previously excluded from the gallery. To this he added the beholder, at first as a privileged spectator, allowed to touch and manipulate the objects provided for her, and then, increasingly, as a participant. Though the form of the work is disrupted it remains predicated on a central, heightened period of time during which other activities are suspended in order to realise the work. Taking responsibility for the arrangement of the work, which frequently entailed a level of resource management more akin to a military exercise, Kaprow's input was invariably more considerable than that of the other participants, according him the role, if not of 'artist', then something approximating that function. The later Happenings and the Activities mark a decentralisation of the work, in which, rather than try to incorporate everything, Kaprow relinquishes control to the extent that the qualities of chance and change that he strove to incorporate entered into the work unbidden.

### Dispersal and reformation

In writing of the Happenings, Kaprow suggests that the relationship between art and life is a binary opposition, as if the extreme edge of one is the point at which it is closest to the other. Developing Environments was the moment at which

...my disagreement with the gallery space began. I thought how much better it would be if you could just go out of doors and float an environment into the rest of life so that such a caesura would not be there.<sup>55</sup>

At this point Kaprow assigns formal properties to 'art' and 'life' - the former is bounded by the walls and the dictates of the gallery, the latter is waiting outside. Subsequently, in determining the characteristics of the Happening, Kaprow does not locate the division so precisely but, maintaining an oppositional stance, presses onward toward a fluctuating 'front line' where the two sides engage;

The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct as possible. The reciprocity between the man-made and the ready-made will be at its maximum potential this way. Something will always happen at this juncture, which, if it is not revelatory, will not be merely bad art - for no one can easily compare it with this or that accepted masterpiece.<sup>56</sup>

It invokes the paradox of 'art' and 'non-art', which assumes that the latter, because it fails to attain - or declares itself indifferent to - the conditions contained within the former has no relationship to it whatsoever, when in fact the only way it comes into being is by adherence to just such a relationship. There is an iconoclastic drive in Kaprow's early Happenings, not so explicit that it enables those resistant to the intentions of the work to dismiss it as reactionary, but none the less pushing him towards the perceived 'edge' of art where the old rules no longer apply, where there are no easy comparisons with accepted masterpieces. By allowing any theme, materials and actions to be incorporated in the work "*except* from the arts, their derivatives and their milieu"<sup>57</sup>, the works consciously intend to distance themselves from art but are implicated still further within its sphere of influence.



*Self-Service*<sup>58</sup>, a Happening dating from 1967, performed concurrently in Boston, New York and Los Angeles, allows considerable freedom to the participants, both in terms of space and time. The introductory notes to the score convey the contrast between this piece and the intense, overwhelming sensory experience laid-on for the beholder of *Words*;

It spanned four months, June through September. Thirty-one activities were selected from a much larger number. Their time and locality distribution were determined by chance methods. Participants selected events from those offered for their city; each had to pick at least one, although doing many or all was preferable. Details of time and place were flexible within each month; choices made from month to month overlapped, some actions recurring.<sup>59</sup>

The artist's control over the event is greatly diminished, and while parameters of time and space are given - four months, a particular city - they are sufficiently wide to prevent the piece filling every part of them, so that it necessarily has to be considered in relation to the time and space of the life that continues around and within it. The temporal and spatial circumstances are largely determined by the participants, while the activities themselves are consciously distanced from the artist's intent through having been chosen by chance methods, and by the understanding that it is left up to the participants to decide which elements to use, and in what order (see fig.7). The participant's role could be regarded as taking precedence over that of the artist, who becomes, as Nick Kaye suggests, a supplier of materials for the former to use;

It is a composition to be taken up by the viewer in the face of those "materials" Kaprow provides, an activity which does not lead to an "end", but which is a sustained

Boston (available activities)

Many shoppers begin to whistle in aisles of supermarket. After a few minutes they go back to their shopping.

Two people telephone each other. Phone rings once, is answered "hello". Caller hangs up. After a few minutes, other person does same. Same answer. Phone clicks off. Repeated with two rings, three rings, four rings, five rings, six rings, seven, eight, nine, etc . . . until a line is busy.

At a supermarket (on another day) transistor radios playing rock are put into shelves of cereal, soaps, freezers, bananas, napkins, etc. Left there. On still another day, bouquets are tucked in with products.

3 a.m. emptiness at a 24-hour washerette. Piles of clothes washed. Turning cylinders, blue-white flourescents. Regularly on the half-hour, loud bunch of photogs burst in, flash pix, leave. Home at five.

In a neighbourhood, people inflate by mouth a twenty-foot weather balloon. It is pushed through the streets and buried in a hole at th beach. The people leave it.

For a few moments at night, shouts, words, calls, all through bullhorns. Voices moving on the streets, from windows, around corners, in hallways, alleys.

Cars drive into filling station, erupt with white foam pouring from windows.

People tie tar paper around many cars in supermarket lot.

On another day, twenty or more flash-gun cameras shoot off at the same time all over supermarket; shopping resumed.

fig.7 excerpt from *Self-Service score*, Allan Kaprow. 1967

process of relating one thing to another, then another,  
then another.<sup>60</sup>

The process echoes Lucie-Smith's understanding of the artist's contribution to Assemblages, "making the links between objects, putting them together," rather than "making objects *ab initio*", though here it is the beholder that is engaged in the activity. The status of the ensuing

action, which, within the context of a theatrical frame might constitute a performance, is lessened, because those most able to discern it as such are caught up in its construction. Because the activities are intermittent, one is invited to consider the periods when the participants are not following Kaprow's instructions but attending to their own lives as a continuation of this decision-making - consciously disregarding the requirements of the activity, and making other choices and using other "materials". Although, through the use of chance methods and the empowering of the individual, Kaprow at times appears to be striving towards emulating an *a priori* notion of what life is, *Self-Service* suggests more that life is a condition derived from the frame that individuals impose around unstructured phenomena. By placing seemingly discontinuous events within this frame, the piece invites the participant to attend to what normally is a transparent process of imposing structure upon the world..

In *Self-Service* there is no formal connection between activities that are highly visible and attract an audience - "Cars drive into filling station, erupt with white foam pouring from windows" - and those that are discernible only to those carrying them out - "People stand on bridges, on street corners, watch cars pass. After two hundred red ones they leave"<sup>61</sup>. To delineate activities into visible and discrete categories, or, to distinguish them in art terms, between performance and conceptual art, is to impose form. From the participant's perspective, the various activities are all tasks that may or may not be carried out. In this sense they could be regarded in terms of Lyotard's *event*, foregrounding the fact of their occurrence over the particular nature of the activity. This is reinforced by the knowledge that other participants, in the same city or elsewhere were also carrying out tasks and, depending on the amount of information available to each individual, it would be possible to regard totally unconnected occurrences as part of

the Happening. Some of the choices, such as the counting of red cars, are so imperceptible both to the outside observer and other participants that any number of people standing on a street might be potential participants. Other activities left a visible trace of their occurrence - "A car is built on an isolated mountain top from junk parts. Is left." - so that the participants, coming across a similar incongruous structure or strange phenomenon might wonder whether it was the product of comparable intent. By isolating behaviour or phenomena into discrete segments, Kaprow encourages his participants to view the world as less familiar than it might previously have seemed. Kaprow moves from promoting the idea of ceremony, with its clearly defined separation from the everyday - the specific location of *Orange*, the sounding of bells in *18 Happenings* - to a condition in which the everyday is infiltrated by the work (and vice versa) to the extent that the division between the two could be regarded as arbitrary and consciously imposed. Unfamiliarity thus arises not from the reordering of elements within a known form but through the disruption of any form stable and broad enough to contain the disparate actions that constitute the work.

The temporal and spatial depth of the work, though it frustrates the assimilation of *Self Service* within a system of discourse, lessens the intensity and efficacy of the actions for those participating; the shared and differing experiences of those involved in *Orange* look toward the evocation of group identity, predicated not on adherence to existing norms but the present experience of its constituents. In both instances, the distinctive quality of the work is governed to a large extent by the dimensions of the frame that encompasses it. In *Orange*, a *specific site* is charged with an importance arising from the concentration of seemingly unrelated activities occurring within its bounds. By contrast, the particular quality of *Self Service* is in part a consequence of *the site's dispersal* (in time and space.) Allan Kaprow's subsequent work,

which he terms "Activities", attempts to provide a forum in which form is questioned, tested and refashioned rather than evaded.

In his three-part essay, *Education of the Un-Artist*, stemming from 1971, Kaprow addresses the problem of using art to escape the confines of art, and suggests that the activity of artists be redirected;

It is only when active artists willingly cease to be artists that they may convert their abilities, like dollars into yen, into something the world can spend: play. Play as currency. Learning to play can best be done by example, and the un-artist can provide it. In the new job of educator, he and she need simply to play as they once did under the banner of art, but among those who do not care about that. Gradually, the pedigree "art" will recede into irrelevance.<sup>62</sup>

There are several departures from the concept of the Happening, principally the idea of play, which Huizinga defines as

...a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious' but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly.<sup>63</sup>

Where Happenings such as *Orange* intentionally mimicked life, representing it, so that at their most 'life-like' they most fully embodied art, play stands apart from life. It is to some degree analogous to both art and life without being intended as a commentary on either. What Kaprow seems to be reaching toward is a condition that is fundamentally a process without any discernible product: it is the active side of the object rejecting representation and just *being* - the participant rejecting prior volition and just *doing*. By engaging with others on a basis other than the artistic, Kaprow attempts to evade the incorporation of his work

into the field of art. The nature of the ensuing activities is difficult to determine because of the paucity of information concerning them - a necessary prerequisite for the avoidance of commodification. One such activity, *Maneuvers*<sup>64</sup>, has been documented by both Kaprow and James Hindman, and serves to illustrate the manner of the work. The scenario for part one is as follows;

1 A and B  
passing backwards  
through a doorway  
one before the other

the other, saying you're first

passing through again  
moving in reverse  
The first, saying thank me  
being thanked

locating four more doors  
repeating routine<sup>65</sup>

Although there is an intention that it precedes an activity, the score is far more indeterminate than those for the Happenings. In *Orange*, there are specific roles - 400 travellers, policeman, girl in bikini, man breaking furniture, etc. - whereas 'A and B' suggests two people (or two groups of people), without specifying sex, attitude or occupation. Similarly, the location is not intended as a backdrop for the activity, a stage or physical frame that surrounds it, but directly relevant to the activity in hand. Whether intentional or not, the lack of speech marks infer that the activity is not a quoting of a fixed text, or the playing out of a scene that has already been mentally performed, but the working through of an idea. The grammar is not syntactically correct but sparse, serving only as a means of enabling an activity.

Although the activity arises from everyday behaviour, its deviance from the norm - passing through the door backwards, telling the other to thank them - prevents it from being a reconstruction of real life, which would focus the participant's attention on their actions' truth-to-life. Instead, the familiarity of the action, coupled with its repetition, distorts the ordinariness. It is comparable to the "strangeness" Susanne Langer believes is evoked by the art work, but differentiated by the lack of a separate beholder/audience and by the fact that it is instigated by the individual rather than an external object, such as a score, as is the case in *Soap* and *Orange*. In this instance, the score initiates the activity but the strangeness arises from the individual's awareness of self. There is not a thing apart either to hold up this strangeness for contemplation (the object), or to legitimate it (the audience), both are within the participants, resulting in a consciousness of self as creator and creation. Such a state is obviously self-reflective, and the score bears the responsibility both for inducing it and, equally, preventing it from slipping into complete inertia. The activity, then, becomes the 'through-line' - not the thing itself, but that which assists in completing it. The presence of the other participant(s) is another factor that hinders contemplation but, more importantly, is a point of reference; Kaprow's notes for another activity, *Routine*<sup>66</sup>, state that "People generally devote themselves to mirroring who they are in others"<sup>67</sup>. In *Maneuvers*, the participant is invited to engage with the other as a means of enabling the "other" within themselves to manifest itself. While the other may be the audience, they are simultaneously the performer(s). This invites one to consider that the co-existence of performer and audience in both the individual consciousness and in 'A and B' requires a more flexible notion of performance. Kaprow makes the following distinction;

Ordinarily, a performance is some kind of play, dance or concert presented to an audience - even in the avant-garde. But actually, there are two types of performance currently

being made by artists: a predominant theatrical one, and a smaller less-recognised non-theatrical one. They correspond, interestingly, to the two meanings the word "performance" has in English. One meaning refers to artistry, as in performing on the violin; while the second meaning has to do with carrying out a job or function, as when performing a task, service or duty; viz., a "high-performance engine".<sup>68</sup>

The second meaning still posits an activity that is subservient to its result - the task, service - whereas for the participants in *Maneuvers* this situation is inverted, with the process taking precedence. This provides problems in terms of validation and legitimation, but only if one wishes it to be art, and, furthermore, if one considers that it is defined as such by contemplating it with reference to other, accepted works. *Maneuvers* was commissioned by the Framart Gallery of Naples, who, while facilitating discussion between participants both before and afterward, appear not to have regarded the exercise as the necessary precursor to more 'exhibitable' documentation and performances. The art context still persists, but with the expectations of the object and its environment and the attitude of the beholder toward it replaced with an awareness of self as viewer and viewed, a dynamic interaction motivated by the individual rather than an external object.

A later Activity, *Satisfaction*<sup>69</sup>, develops this way of approaching behaviour in a social context rather than on an interpersonal level. Four participants carry out four separate activities, either in pairs or as a group. In the third part, it is apparent that one pair (C & D) instruct the other (A & B) in their actions;

C and D, saying to B:

feed A  
(or)



*kiss A*  
(or)  
*bathe A*

showing how

B, answering: *unh-hunh*  
(or)  
*unh-unh*

complying if agreeable

C and D, nodding or shaking heads

C and D, repeating request  
or choosing another

B, answering

complying or not

C and D, nodding or shaking heads  
till options are exhausted<sup>70</sup>

Though the actions are given, the interpretation of responses and the whole spirit in which the activity is carried out can not be determined by Kaprow. Underlying the declared activity is a subtext predicated on the individuals' understanding of the reactions of the others. The activity is sufficiently personal to involve the feelings the participants might have for each other, it is "a routine which both protects them from real life while revealing it abundantly"<sup>71</sup>. Kaprow's notes for the Activity suggest that it is concerned with the economics of attention-getting and giving, an exchange that even the artist, unless they are a participant, cannot play any part in.<sup>72</sup> As with *Maneuvers*, the Activity's audience is incorporated within the piece, though, superficially, the participants alternate between active and passive states, the switch between one and the other itself a trade in attention.

Kaprow's departure from the conventions that inform artistic practice is such that one might usefully look to other disciplines to find an appropriate means of engaging with his work. Though it is not known whether he is familiar with the text, Eric Berne's *Games People Play*, published in 1964, approaches Kaprow's area of investigation from the field of psychology. Developing his work on transactional analysis, Berne identifies three deficiencies that provoke social intercourse; the need for stimulus, recognition and structure. Structuring of time provides a frame within which the other requirements can be met;

The most common, convenient, comfortable, and utilitarian method of structuring time is by a project designed to deal with the material of external reality: what is commonly known as work. Such a project is technically called an *activity*.<sup>73</sup>

More specialised means of structuring time identified by Berne are, in order of complexity, rituals, pastimes, games, and intimacy. It was noted that Kaprow initially developed the Happening along the lines of ritual, which, as defined by Berne, is a "stereotyped series of simple complementary transactions programmed by external social forces"<sup>74</sup>. In the absence of a ritual stereotype (as evident in the work of Lebel) Kaprow instigated transactions, the artist being the outside agency determining its occurrence. Later works, such as *Self-Service*, begin to exhibit an increasing consciousness of the carrying out of the task (the participant's experience) and a corresponding lessening of importance of the role of the artist. With the Activity, Kaprow ceases to provide unfamiliar tasks for his participants and instead allows them to question material that is "almost too familiar to grasp"<sup>75</sup>. The artist's notes for *Satisfaction* are comparable to Berne's understanding of the goal of social interaction;

The goal of each member of the aggregation is to obtain as many satisfactions as possible from his transactions with other members. The more accessible he is, the more satisfactions he can obtain. Most of the programming of his social operations is automatic.<sup>76</sup>

The function of the Activity would then be to recognise this automatic behaviour, "focusing on what is habitual and trying to put a line round what is continuous."<sup>77</sup> In one sense, this might be regarded as the imposition of form, though this is not the work's intent. Rather, by acknowledging the hidden structures that underlie the most common behaviour patterns, the participant is able to challenge them, replacing mechanical behaviour with "awareness, spontaneity and intimacy"<sup>78</sup>.

---

## Conclusion

---

Kaprow's initial Assemblages can be seen as reactions to the limitations of painting as a medium. Proceeding from the removal of the field in figurative work, he replaces it with real materials and sensations that widen the vocabulary of the medium rather than challenge the language that it employs. The accommodation of Duchamp's Readymades within the canon is a fate potentially awaiting any object that might seek to undermine the dictates of art, as repeated viewing of their unchanging form encourages acceptance and then familiarity. One of the means of challenging this is to resist the frontality of the object, providing conflicting ways of receiving the work - as is the case with Rauschenberg's *Monogram* - a strategy more fully explored in the Minimal works of Robert Morris, Carl Andre, Donald Judd and others. Kaprow is less subtle in detaining the beholder, first with sounds that emanate from Assemblages through to Environments that are entered

into. The object becomes less important as a visual stimulus and more so as a pretext for structuring the time of the beholder.

Initially, Kaprow's Environments foregrounded the beholder's sense of being surrounded, stimulating several senses in an approximation of the way in which the world outside the gallery is acknowledged. The works did not however give much attention to the potential of the beholder as an element within the environment. Instead, Kaprow's Environments place considerable emphasis on changing the circumstances of the beholder but allow only limited and predetermined manipulation of themselves. In the absence of the rules of the gallery space, Kaprow instigates new rules of engagement, whether the scrawled instructions in *Words* or the precise programme notes accompanying *18 Happenings*. These scripts or "scores", one for the performers and another for the audience, paradoxically both reinforced the divide between the two parties and yet accentuated the distinction to the point where its limitations became apparent. Both performers and audience were being directed in their actions; it was the residue of the idea of the art work as object that maintained distinctions between these actions. Thus, the performers were providing something for the audience to respond to, while the preciseness of the score, and often the exactness of the ensuing execution, arising from frequent rehearsal, provided the work with a particularity that would ensure its autonomy. Kaprow's subsequent guidelines on Happenings, emphasising their unrepeatability, coupled with his interest in change and chance, resulted in a shift from *the work* as an entity toward *work* as an activity. The random selection of tasks in *Self-Service* suggests that the work is not the realisation of the materials provided by the artist but the act of responding to them. It looks forward to the imposition of structure on everyday occurrences in the Activities, as decisions as to what task to

realise, and where and when to enact it, permeate other more worldly considerations.

In the Activities, meticulous attention to habitual behaviour, through speeding up and slowing down actions, inverting roles and other devices, renders the underlying structure discernible, not to be held up for inspection, but as a framework shaping behaviour in real time. Though the work might easily slip into performance - the success of the Activity is dependent on Kaprow making a familiar task sufficiently odd that habitual responses are disrupted and yet not so strange that the commonplace is forsaken for the surreal exploration it engenders - both *Maneuvers* and *Satisfaction* demand equal commitment from all participating. In *Satisfaction*, a shift toward an ironic stance by any of the participants is mediated through all the others; though it may be a reflection on the work, it is simultaneously another exchange within its terms.

From denouncing the limitations of structure in his early work, confronting habitual responses with the unexpected, Kaprow's more recent explorations unearth the form determining the most commonplace activities. In a sense, he applies the same criteria for selecting material as Lucie-Smith observed in Pop artists, "things we think of in a way which is almost entirely abstract", though accumulating actions rather than objects. Where this return to existing form marks an advance over its previous incarnation in Assemblages is the potential for form to be manipulated, questioned and evaluated by the very people that bring it into being. The artist serves as a guide to those areas where the individual habitually performs certain tasks and obligations without sufficient distance to acknowledge them as potential sites of self-discovery. By calling attention to this behaviour, Kaprow and those working with him foreground the performative element of the activity so that it embraces Kaprow's two definitions of the word performance, both

that before an audience and that concerned with carrying out a task. In his 1976 essay, "Non-Theatrical Performance", Kaprow articulates the flexibility of this position: "'performance' is an attitude about involvement on some plane in something going on. It does not have to be 'on stage' and it really does not have to be announced."<sup>79</sup> It is the basis for an engagement that does not recognise the division of artist and beholder, the imposition of a determining judgement, nor even the necessity of physical involvement. Kaprow reaches a point where he is no longer in flight from the tyranny of form, instead regarding it as something he may chose to apply to "something going on" in whatever manner he pleases.

- 1 Lucie-Smith, Edward Movements in Art since 1945 London: Thames and Hudson, 1969 p36.
- 2 Berman, Barbara & Allan Kaprow. "Interview." in Kaprow, Allan, and Barbara Berman. Allan Kaprow. Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1967 p7 see also Kaprow, Allan. "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock." Art News Vol 57 no.6: October 1958 pp.24-26,55-57
- 3 Mondrian, Piet. "Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art" in Martin, J.L. B. Nicholson & N. Gabo (eds.) Circle - International Survey of Constructive Art London: Faber & Faber, 1937 pp 41-56 reprinted in Mondrian, Piet. The New Art - The New Life: The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian. Holzman, Harry and Martin S. James (eds.) Boston: 1986 p293
- 4 Lucie-Smith, Edward Movements in Art since 1945 p119.
- 5 "Each art possesses its own *means of expression*", see Mondrian, Piet. "Neo-Plasticism: the General Principle of Plastic Equivalence." Le Néo-Plasticisme: Principe général de l'équivalence plastique Paris: Editions de l'Effort Moderne, 1920 reprinted in Mondrian, Piet. The New Art - The New Life: The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian. Holzman, Harry and Martin S. James (eds.) Boston: 1986 pp 134-147
- 6 Mondrian, Piet. "Dialogue on the New Plastic" (Dialoog over de Nieuwe Beelding [zanger en schilder] De Stijl Vol 2 no. 4 February 1919, pp.37-39 & no. 5 March 1919 pp 49-53 reprinted in Mondrian, Piet. The New Art - The New Life: The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian. Holzman, Harry and Martin S. James (eds.) Boston: 1986 p76
- 7 Mondrian, Piet. "Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art" p374.
- 8 Piet Mondrian. Broadway Boogie-Woogie 1942-3 Oil on canvas 50" x 50in.
- 9 Mondrian, Piet. "Dialogue on the New Plastic." p284
- 10 Kostelanetz, Richard The Theatre of Mixed Means New York: Pitman Publishing, 1968 p103
- 11 Jackson Pollock. Lavender Mist 1958 Oil, enamel and aluminium paint on canvas. 86½ x 119in.
- 12 Pollock, Jackson. "My Painting." Possibilities no.1 New York. Winter 1947-8 cited in Lucie-Smith, Edward Movements in Art since 1945 p34.
- 13 Mondrian, Piet. "Dialogue on the New Plastic." p78.
- 14 Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1966 p159.
- 15 Robert Rauschenberg. Bed 1955. Combine painting 74in. x 3ft
- 16 Allan Kaprow. Wall 1957-9. Rearrangeable Panels (Assemblage)
- 17 For a suspended assemblage see for example Robert Whitman. Untitled 1958 6'x6'x6'. Assemblage, illustrated in Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings p41 (plate30). Robert Rauschenberg's Monogram 1955-9. Freestanding Combine 42x64x64½" is an example of the latter orientation.
- 18 Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings pp 155-6
- 19 Allan Kaprow. Kiosk 1957-59. Rearrangeable panels (Assemblage)
- 20 Allan Kaprow. Penny Arcade 1956. Assemblage with lights and sound
- 21 For a description of this piece see Kaprow, Allan, and Richard Schechner. "Extensions in Time and Space an interview with Allan Kaprow." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.229-32.
- 22 Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings p161.

- 23       ibid p167.
- 24       ibid. p159.
- 25       ibid p159.
- 26       Allan Kaprow. *Words Environment* Smolin Gallery, New York. September 11-22, 1962.
- 27       Allan Kaprow. *An Apple Shrine*. 1960. Environment.
- 28       McDarragh, F W. "Art " The Village Voice 13th September 1962 p9
- 29       George Brecht *Blair* 1959 5'x1½'x2" Rearrangeable Assemblage.
- 30       Schechner, Richard. Environmental Theatre New York: Hawthorn, 1973 p44.
- 31       Allan Kaprow. *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* Happening Reuben Gallery, New York, October 4,6,7,8,9 & 10 1959
- 32       Letter to potential audience for *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* quoted in Kirby, Michael. Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1965 p67.
- 33       Programme Notes for *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* , quoted in Goldberg, Roselee. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present London: Thames & Hudson, 1988 p129
- 34       Kirby, Michael Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology p71.
- 35       ibid . p66
- 36       ibid. , p145
- 37       Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from Philosophy in a New Key London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953. p307.
- 38       Kirby, Michael Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology p67.
- 39       Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form p311.
- 40       John Cage's *Untitled Event*, regarded as the most influential event leading to the emergence of the Happenings, had occurred seven years earlier at Black Mountain College, North Carolina see Cage, John, Michael Kirby and Richard Schechner. "An Interview with John Cage." Tulane Drama Review Winter 1965 pp 50-72.
- 41       Kaprow, Allan Assemblage, Environments and Happenings pp 188-98.
- 42       ibid , p187.
- 43       Kaprow, Allan. "Participation Performance." Artforum March 1977 p26.
- 44       Jean-Jacques Lebel. *Funeral Ceremony of the Anti-Process* Venice July 14, 1960
- 45       Lebel's account of the work is included in Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings pp 228-32.
- 46       Lucie-Smith, Edward. "Pop Art." in Stangos, Nikos (ed ) Concepts of Modern Art revised and enlarged ed London: Thames and Hudson, 1981 p233.
- 47       Allan Kaprow. *Fluids* Happening November 1967 Los Angeles.
- 48       Allan Kaprow in Kaprow, Allan, and Richard Schechner "Extensions in Time and Space an interview with Allan Kaprow." Tulane Drama Review Vol 10, no 2 Winter 1965 p154.
- 49       ibid , p156.
- 50       Allan Kaprow. *Orange* Happening unused citrus warehouse, Coral Gables, Florida March 7 1964.



- 51 Allan Kaprow *Household Happening* May 1964 The score and documentary photographs for this Happening can be found in Kaprow, Allan Assemblage, Environments and Happenings pp 323-337.
- 52 Langer, Susanne K Feeling and Form p46
- 53 Kaprow, Allan Assemblage, Environments and Happenings p172
- 54 Schneemann, Carolee More than Meat Joy McPherson, Bruce (ed.) New York Documentext, 1979 p57.
- 55 Allan Kaprow, quoted in Buettner, Stewart American Art Theory: 1945-1970 Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981 p116
- 56 Kaprow, Allan Assemblage, Environments and Happenings pp 188-9
- 57 Ibid , p189
- 58 Allan Kaprow *Self-Service* Happening Boston, New York and Los Angeles June-September 1966
- 59 Kaprow, Allan "Self-Service A Happening " The Drama Review Spring 1968 p160.
- 60 Kaye, Nick "Postmodernism and Performance." Music Theatre Dance Vol 1 Winter 1990 p10.
- 61 Kaprow, Allan "Self Service: A Happening " pp 160-4
- 62 Kaprow, Allan. "Education of the Un-Artist Part 2 " Art News May 1971. p63
- 63 Huizinga, J Homo Ludens New York Beacon Press, 1955 p13
- 64 Allan Kaprow *Maneuvers* Activity Naples March 1976
- 65 Cited in Hindman, James T. "Self-Performance Allan Kaprow's Activities." The Drama Review Vol 23 no 1 [T81] Spring 1979 p96
- 66 Allan Kaprow *Routine* Activity Portland Oregon 1973
- 67 Allan Kaprow, Notes to *Routine* quoted in Hindman, James T "Self-Performance." p101
- 68 Kaprow, Allan "Non-Theatrical Performance " Artforum May 1976 p50
- 69 Allan Kaprow *Satisfaction* New York April 1976
- 70 Kaprow, Allan Satisfaction New York: M.L.D'Arc Gallery, 1976 unpaginated
- 71 ibid ,
- 72 ibid ,
- 73 Berne, Eric, M D Games People Play The Psychology of Human Relationships New York: Grove Press, 1964 (Penguin 1968) pp 15-16
- 74 ibid , p34
- 75 Kaprow, Allan "Participation Performance " p26
- 76 Berne, Eric, M D Games People Play p18
- 77 Kaprow, Allan "Participation Performance " p26
- 78 Berne, Eric, M D Games People Play p158
- 79 Kaprow, Allan "Non-Theatrical Performance " Artforum May 1976 p50

In the preceding chapters, the works of Robert Morris and Allan Kaprow were posited as moves to reconsider the status, and, occasionally, the necessity of the object to the art work. Where the object had served as the focus of attention, its primacy was challenged by the Primary Structures' invitation to the beholder to consider her activity before the object of equal if not greater import than any of its physical characteristics. Morris' later "Anti Form" work again served to privilege process over product, by foregrounding the labour of the artist. Allan Kaprow initially sought to make form inclusive (Assemblages and Environments), then to dispense with it altogether (Happenings.) Latterly, he acknowledged the impossibility of eradicating form and, instead, highlighted its existence in everyday behaviour with the Activities, rendering it at once both accessible and mutable.

Kaprow's journey from "found" objects to "found" behaviour follows a path that largely avoids assuming the terms and conditions of pre-existing disciplines, be they painting, sculpture or theatre. Like Morris, whilst astute enough to avoid becoming embroiled in defending an oppositional "anti" or "non" art stance, Kaprow nonetheless laboured against and, subsequently, outside an art establishment perpetuated by wealthy institutions and individuals committed to the equivalence of aesthetic and financial values. Clearly, for the artists to generate an income, funds arising from their engagement in object-directed work are forthcoming<sup>1</sup>, though the refusal to generate objects that conflate the aesthetic with the economic severs the link between an informed, wealthy elite and an impoverished avant-garde, an "umbilical cord of gold", as Greenberg observes<sup>2</sup>. Kaprow distances himself from many of the accoutrements of the traditional artist, specifically the realisation of an 'artistic' temperament in objects that might be judged to possess aesthetic qualities. In doing so, he tests the prevailing understanding of

what an artist might be and invites a reconsideration of the role of such a figure.

The reappraisal of the artist's role might be regarded as an inevitable, if unintentional, consequence of the evasion of form in Kaprow's work. For Joseph Beuys, such a reappraisal, focused on the creative impulse of the individual, as opposed to its manifestation in objects, is the fundamental purpose of art. Beuys' foregrounding of the artist, not only in relation to the art work, but in every sphere of human activity, might be considered as a disruption of form that proceeds in a very different manner from that instigated by the work of Kaprow. Rather than an accumulation of everything within the frame so that what constitutes this frame is no longer discernible, Beuys declares himself to be at the centre of the work and defines all other elements in relation to his position.

Such is the centrality of Beuys-the-artist to anything he engages with that its identity, whether political activism, discussion, sculpting, even eating and drinking is secondary to the larger project of presenting Joseph Beuys. As the art critic Alastair Mackintosh observed after encountering Beuys' performances during the first of several visits to Scotland, "Joseph Beuys' greatest work is Joseph Beuys, or rather the presentation of Joseph Beuys."<sup>3</sup> The terms of particular modes of expression - performance, object work, political activism - are sufficiently adhered to for them to be recognised as such, but in the works' continual referral to the biographical and mythological circumstances of their creator and, by extension, to each other, form is destabilised.

The interdependencies of Beuys' works are such that interrogation of any individual object or performance tends not to furnish a fuller understanding of the entity but instead strengthen the sense that it must

situate itself in relation to other, absent contexts. These contexts are not bounded by assembling the artist's oeuvre, as with Tolkien's Middle Earth novels and Josef Albers' 'Homage to the Square' series, but spill out into the consequential world inhabited by the beholder that Beuys declares to be equally susceptible to fashioning by the artist. Any point of entry into the work of Joseph Beuys is arbitrary, since it necessarily imposes division - addressing a particular area of enquiry, be it a comparatively narrow field such as his drawings or the broader sweep of biography - upon an artist whose allure is founded on the indivisibility of his actions into discrete spheres. The following remarks trace a route through the totality of Joseph Beuys, acknowledging some of the divergent paths that are encountered, but resisting the temptation to extrapolate the topography from the singularity of the trail.

### Inventing the past

Beuys set out a persona that in its projection attempted to undermine historical and cultural assumptions that might inhibit its development, reconceiving the art object by locating it within himself. The very qualities that Susanne Langer ascribes to the work of art - "otherness" and "self-sufficiency" among them - and the concept of aura that the critic Walter Benjamin identified in the object's uniqueness and distance from the beholder<sup>4</sup>, questioned by Morris, Kaprow and other artists who came to prominence in the 1960s, is seemingly resurrected in the physical presence of Joseph Beuys. Initially this move took the form of performances that were overtly theatrical<sup>5</sup>, but as the 'stage' for Beuys' interventions widened to include economic, political and ecological concerns, consideration of the work within the prevailing understanding of art became problematic. Even the props for Beuys performances - the distinctive uniform of felt hat, sleeveless jacket, baggy trousers and boots - pressed into service for almost every

subsequent public appearance, coupled with "an intensity where psychodrama and didacticism go together like lettuce and tomato",<sup>6</sup> imbued even the most mundane occasion with the air of a performance. To a degree he embodies Lyotard's conception of the postmodern artist, one who "puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself"<sup>7</sup>, though it will be argued that Beuys' project exposes a limitation in Lyotard's projection of the postmodern.

The entwining of the individual's existence and his creative activity is exemplified by *Life Course/Work Course*,<sup>8</sup> a chronology first issued by the artist in 1964 and subsequently revised and altered by Beuys in later years (see fig. 8). *Life Course/Work Course* is the most obvious manifestation of Beuys' reclamation of his past. It is an explicit declaration of his *weltanschauung*, though to his detractors it has been regarded as a means to place the emergence of the seamless totality of Beuys back in the distant past, beyond the inquisitiveness of the casual enquirer (and certainly off-limits to the potential biographer.)<sup>9</sup> The extent to which Beuys would appear to favour a revisionist policy toward his past is characterised by the doubt arising from his plane crash whilst serving with the Luftwaffe during the Second World War. Shot down over the Crimea, Beuys was rescued from the wreckage by Tartars who resuscitated him by wrapping him in fat and felt<sup>10</sup>. The elaboration of this seemingly pivotal event in Beuys' life, from its first appearance in Adriani, Konnertz and Thomas' monograph (1973, German edition)<sup>11</sup> to its amplification to include the restorative powers of fat and felt in Tisdall's exhibition catalogue (1979)<sup>12</sup> is given little prominence in *Life Course/Work Course* (1964), in which it is alluded to in the reticent entry, "Sebastopol Exhibition during the interception of a Ju-87". The scepticism expressed over the circumstances of his plane crash<sup>13</sup> does little to lessen the force of the story; if anything it places it alongside the image of him as shaman, in the realm of myth, that cannot be tested by

## Joseph Beuys: Life Course/Work Course

- 1921 Kleve Exhibition of a wound drawn together with plaster
- 1922 Exhibition of dairy cows Molkerei near Kleve
- 1923 Exhibition of a moustache cup (contents: coffee with egg)
- 1924 Kleve Open exhibition of heathen children
- 1925 Kleve Documentation: "Beuys as Exhibitor"
- 1926 Kleve Exhibition of a stagleader
- 1927 Kleve Exhibition of radiation
- 1928 Kleve First exhibition of an excavated trench  
Kleve Exhibition to elucidate the difference between loamy sand and sandy loam
- 1929 Exhibition at the grave of Gengis Khan
- 1930 Donsbrüggen Exhibition of heathers with healing herbs
- 1931 Kleve Connecting exhibition  
Kleve Exhibition of connections
- 1933 Kleve Underground exhibition (digging beneath the ground parallel to the surface)
- 1940 Posen Exhibition of an arsenal (together with Heinz Sielmann, Hermann Ulrich Asemissen, and Eduard Spranger)  
Exhibition of an airfield, Erfurt-Bindersleben  
Exhibition of an airfield, Erfurt-Nord
- 1942 Sebastapol Exhibition of my friend  
Sebastapol Exhibition during the interception of a JU-87
- 1943 Oranienburg Interim exhibition (together with Fritz Rolf Rothenburg + Heinz Sielmann)
- 1945 Kleve Exhibition of cold
- 1946 Kleve warm exhibition  
Kleve Artists' Union "Profile of the Successor" Happening Central Station, Heilbronn
- 1947 Kleve Artists' Union "Profile of the Successor"  
Kleve Exhibition for the hard of hearing
- 1948 Kleve Artists' Union "Profile of the Successor"  
Düsseldorf Exhibition in the Pillen Bettenhaus  
Krefeld Exhibition "Kullhaus" (together with A R. Lynen)
- 1949 Heerdt Total exhibition three times in a row  
Kleve Artists' Union "Profile of the Successor"
- 1950 Beuys reads "Finnegans Wake" in Haus Wylermeer" Kranenburg Haus van der Grinten  
"Giocondologie"  
Kleve Artists' Union "Profile of the Successor"
- 1951 Kranenburg Van der Grinten Collection Beuys: Sculpture and Drawing
- 1952 Düsseldorf 19th prize in "Steel and Pig's Trotter" (consolation prize, a light-ballet by Piene)  
Wuppertal Museum of Art Beuys Crucifixes  
Amsterdam Exhibition in honour of the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal  
Nijmegen Museum of Art Beuys: Sculpture
- 1953 Kranenburg Van der Grinten Collection Beuys: Painting
- 1955 End of the Artists' Union "Profile of the Successor"
- 1956-57 Beuys works in the fields

## Joseph Beuys: Life Course/Work Course

- 1957-60 Recovery from working in the fields
- 1961 Beuys is appointed Professor of Sculpture at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art  
Beuys adds two chapters to "Ulysses" at James Joyce's request
- 1962 Beuys: The Earth Piano
- 1963 FLUXUS Düsseldorf Academy of Art On a warm July evening on the occasion of a lecture by Allan Kaprow in the Zwirner Gallery, Cologne Kolumba churchyard Beuys exhibits his warm fat  
Joseph Beuys Fluxus stable exhibition in Haus van der Grinten, Kranenburg, Lower Rhine
- 1964 Documenta 3 Sculpture Drawing
- 1964 Beuys recommends that the Berlin Wall be heightened by 5cm (better proportions!); 1964 Beuys "VEHICLE ART"; Beuys the Art Pill; Aachen; Copenhagen Festival; Beuys Felt works and Fat Corners WHY?; Friendship with Bob Morris and Yvonne Rainer; Beuys Mouse Tooth Happening Düsseldorf - New York; Beuys Berlin "The Chief"; Beuys: The Silence of Marcel Duchamp is overrated. 1964 Beuys Brown Rooms; Beuys Stag Hunt (behind); 1965 and in us...under us...landunder, Parnass Gallery, Wuppertal, Western Man Project; Schmela Gallery, Düsseldorf; ...any old noose...; "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare"; 1966 and here already is the end of Beuys; Per Kirkeby "2,15"; Beuys Eurasia 32nd Set 1963 - Rene Block, Berlin - "...with brown cross"; Copenhagen; Traekvogn Eurasia; Affirmation; the greatest contemporary composer is the thalidomide child; Division the Cross; Homogen for grand piano (Felt); Homogen for Cello (Felt); Manresa with Björn Nörgard, Schmela Gallery, Düsseldorf; Beuys The Moving Insulator; Beuys The difference between Image Head and Mover Head; Drawings, St Stephan Gallery, Vienna; 1967 Darmstadt Joseph Beuys and Henning Christiansen "Hauptstrom"; Darmstadt Fat Room, Franz Dahlem Gallery, Aha-Strasse; Vienna Beuys and Christiansen "Eurasienstab" 82 minute fluxorum organum; Düsseldorf June 21st, Beuys founds the DSP German Student Party; 1967 Mönchengladbach (Johannes Cladders) Parallel Process 1; Karl Ströher; THE EARTH TELEPHONE; Antwerp Wide White Space Gallery; Image Head - Mover Head (Eurasienstab); Parallel Process 2; THE GREAT GENERATOR 1968 Eindhoven Stedelijk van Abb Museum Jan Leering. Parallel Process 3; Kassel Documenta 4 Parallel Process 4; Munich Neue Pinakothek; Hamburg ALMENDE (Art Union); Nuremberg ROOM 563 x 491 x 563 (Fat); Earjom Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Braunschweig, Würm-Glazial (Parallel Process 5); Frankfurt: Felt TV II The Leg of Rochus Kowallek not carried out in fat (JOM)! Düsseldorf Felt TV III Parallel Process; Intermedia Gallery, Cologne VACUUM-MASS (Fat) Parallel Process; Gulo Borealis...for Bazon Brock; Johannes Stüttgen FLUXUS ZONE WEST Parallel Process - Düsseldorf, Academy of Art, Eiskellerstrasse 1: LEBERVERBOT; Intermedia Gallery, Cologne; Drawings 1947 - 1956; Christmas 1968: Crossing over of the IMAGE HEAD track with the track of the MOVER HEAD in All (Space) Parallel Process - 1969 Düsseldorf Schmela Gallery FOND III; 12.2.69 Appearance of MOVER HEAD over the Düsseldorf Academy of Art; Beuys takes the blame for the snowfall from 15th - 20th February; Berlin - Rene Block Gallery; Joseph Beuys and Henning Christiansen: I attempt to set (make) you free - Grand piano jom (zone jom) Berlin National Gallery, Berlin Academy of Art; Sauerkraut Score - Eat the Score! Mönchengladbach: Transformation Concert with Henning Christiansen, Düsseldorf Kunsthalle Exhibition (Karl Ströher); Lucerne Fat Room (Clock); Basel Kunstmuseum Drawings; Düsseldorf PROSPECT: ELASTIC FOOT PLASTIC FOOT.

fig 8 Lebenslauf/Werklauf (Life Course/Work Course) 1964

empirical means. Events of which Beuys could have only the vaguest memory, such as seeing cows near Kleve at the age of one, (1922) and his wartime experiences, alluded to several times, including the cryptic entry "Kleve Exhibition of cold"<sup>14</sup> are all described as 'exhibitions'. It implies Beuys' participation in some grand design, as if the formative moments of his life were not fortuitous but intended and, furthermore, that they had the quality of an aesthetic experience.

From 1964 onwards, *Life Course/Work Course* ceases to adhere to the structure of a formal chronology and is presented as a continuous stream of events that are almost exclusively the titles of Beuys' major works. The conflation of life experiences and art works is still evident, though from 1964, the time of *Life Course/Work Course*'s first appearance, Beuys presents art works as incidents rather than vice versa, suggesting that this year marked a transition from a passive attendance before significant events (or 'exhibitions') to an active generation of such occurrences. He had performed several works since the beginning of his involvement with the loose association of Fluxus artists - "individuals with something unnameable in common"<sup>15</sup> - in late 1962, though 1964 marked the first conflict between Beuys and a public unwilling to entertain his wider understanding of art. An action staged in Aachen on the twentieth anniversary of the assassination attempt on Hitler<sup>16</sup> (1964) prompted right-wing students to overrun the stage and attack Beuys. Though he remained nonchalant immediately after the attack, and in his subsequent comments, there is little doubt that he took note of the efficacy of the piece. He declared that his "primitive" materials, which in this instance included, in addition to fat and felt, copper, dried oak leaves and marjoram,

had the power to move areas of feeling in people which  
until then had been fairly untouched by the most gruesome



depictions of human suffering, illness, want, concentration camps and so on.<sup>17</sup>

Implicit in his remark is the disavowal of history as a fixed narrative in favour of a past that has yet to be objectified or rather the rejection of representation with its necessary accommodation of the past and the acceptance of the potential of the present to create its own history. This is apparent in an early performance, *Chief-Fluxus Song*<sup>18</sup>:

For eight hours Beuys is wrapped in a large roll of felt, extended on each end by two dead hares. Next to Beuys is another felt roll of almost equal length containing a heavy copper rod. There are bushels of hair and fingernails on the floor. A strip of fat runs parallel to the wall and fat corners transform the room (Gallery René Block, Berlin) into a Beuys environment. A microphone is hidden in his felt roll and he sends sound messages: moaning, breathing, coughing, hissing, and other acoustic vibrations. The eerie sound is at times relieved with taped music.<sup>19</sup>

The piece was the first of Beuys' performances immersed in the symbolism he would employ in future works. It was intended to be simultaneously performed by Robert Morris at the Judson Church in New York, though he was unable to use the space<sup>20</sup>. Lasting approximately eight hours, it contains many of the recurring icons of Beuys' work - felt, fat, dead hares, copper - in addition to the artist himself. Attention is drawn away from the objects' relationships with each other and toward that with Beuys. This is encouraged by the wide dissemination of information pertaining to Beuys, notably the plane crash he experienced during the war. The manner in which the circumstances of his survival and the attributes of the shaman entwine gives the figure of Beuys a presence that exceeds and undermines the simple fact of his existence in the same space as the beholder. Unlike that which Fried terms "literalist" work, or the inclusiveness of environments, Beuys'

performances and objects might be regarded as maintaining an impassable spatial divide between themselves and the beholder. Rather than direct attention to the shared space of beholder and object Beuys reiterates the gulf between himself and his audience.

In *Chief Fluxus Song*, the insulating properties of fat and felt, whilst symbolically sustaining the artist, serve to exclude the audience; Beuys is not visible and his voice is mediated through microphone and speakers. The work's content is similarly disruptive in that Beuys articulates an elaborate ritual that calls upon a lexicon of images and gestures to which the beholder has no access. The spatial division between Beuys and the beholder remains constant, such that the regarding of his work, be it a performance, a sculpture or a discussion, conforms to the physical separation of object from beholder. There is no apparent effort by Beuys to critique or exceed the aesthetic frame he employs; in *Chief Fluxus Song*, the world beyond the gallery that Beuys seeks to communicate with is another artist in a different performing space. Though such exclusionary tactics could be regarded as confirming a view of art as the entertainment of an informed elite, such suspicions arise from entrenched positions that Beuys considers to be invalid.

*Chief Fluxus Song* is insufficiently stable for the beholder to interrogate the object through its creator or vice versa, as their dependence upon one another is explored in the work itself. Beuys inverts the relationship between past and present, so that rather than being constrained in his current situation by the accumulation of material that precedes it, he empowers the present moment to the point where it is capable of realigning the past. Beuys seeks to create a past that will authenticate the present in which he would wish to exist. The past is continually alluded to in his work, both symbolically in the use of

previously "charged" objects such as fat and felt, the implicit references to the shaman of an earlier, more efficacious age when society invested such individuals with wisdom and powers of healing, and also directly, with elements conveying the sense of life now gone - dead hares, fingernails, hair. As the critic Mark Taylor suggests, "if the encounter with the past has never taken place, the past is, paradoxically, always still to come."<sup>21</sup>

Such a condition removes the basis upon which form determines the work: the situation is reversed, as the work creates a past to which it refers and a future in which it will have existed. This is apparent in an object such as *Pt Co Fe*<sup>22</sup>, an eight foot tall iron cage in which is suspended a block of cobalt and platinum, the three materials listed by their chemical names in the title. Accompanying the work is the following inscription by Beuys:

The clamp which hangs in this iron cage held in turn: from 1948 to 1954 a small head of Mars, from 1954 to 1958 a plaster head of Napoleon, from 1958 to 1963 an amorphous lump of plaster with fat, from 1963 to 1972 a block of copper of the same shape as the block of cobalt and platinum which is now attached to the clamp.<sup>23</sup>

Rather than allow the object autonomy, Beuys imposes a history upon it so that it exists in the interstice between relic and realisation: the title is a literal translation into chemical terms of the object but the inscription invites the beholder to regard the work not as wholly present but as the remnant of a process that exceeds the title's pretensions to empiricism. The disparity between the solidity of the object physically present before the beholder and the vaporous trails of meaning that Beuys imposes between object and audience shift consideration from the thing itself to its creator. The continued activity of the artist suggests

that some future action or text will illuminate the work. Its previous manipulation, whether real or fictive, presents the beholder with the possibility that its present incarnation is yet one more stage in the object's evolution. This possibility is compounded by Beuys' refashioning of some existing works, often employing a substance he termed *braunkreuz*<sup>24</sup> (see plate 25). Furthermore, the autonomy of individual works was undermined by their placement within "blocks" - collections of paintings and drawings - sometimes determined by the tastes of collectors for whom they were destined, or, as is the case with *The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland*<sup>25</sup>, informed by the artist's "selection of thinking forms in evolution over a period of time"<sup>26</sup>.

Just as Beuys creates his-story in *Life Course/Work Course*, so he evades the dictates of the past in his performances. The objects and

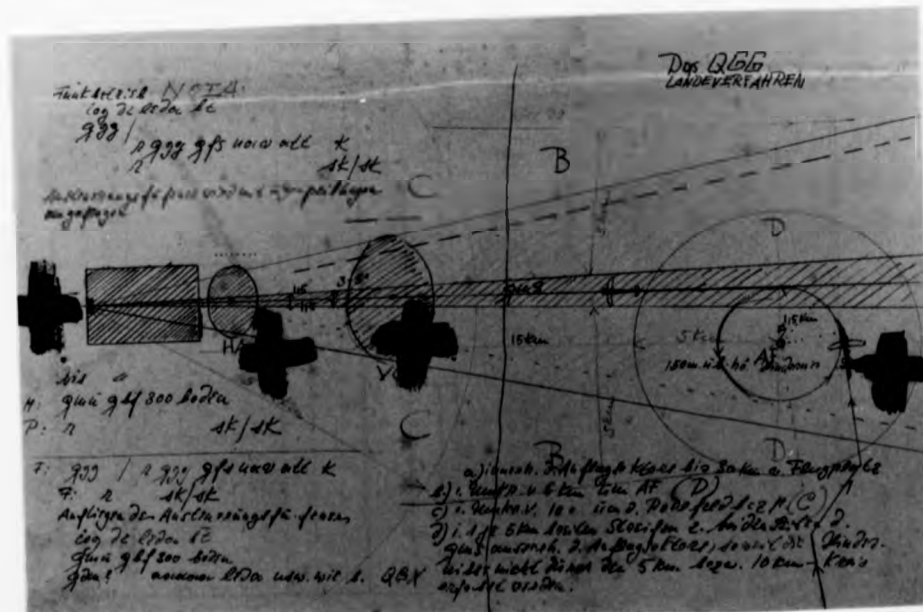


Plate 25. Joseph Beuys. *QGG Land Procedures Crossed Four Times* 1941/63. Pencil, pen and ink, and oil (*Braunkreuz*) on paper. 8 1/4 x 11 1/2"

Beuys himself both look back to a prior event for their power of signification, though it is an event over which Beuys has control. The felt in *Chief Fluxus Song*, for example, is significant because of felt's prior use in the artist's performances, rather than as a consequence of any properties it might possess independently of the artist's intervention. The value of both Beuys and the objects does not reside in their appearance at the moment of perception by the beholder but is continually deferred back to an earlier time that cannot exist. There can be no 'original' performance in which these values are extant because of the continual necessity for a prior one from which they draw their power. The unconscious association of specific objects before the beholder with others that share a similar shape or function - an appeal to their mimetic quality - is thus thwarted, unless the beholder considers the world evoked by Beuys as normative. Consequently, the beholder is invited to consider not the objects or actions themselves, but rather the artist, the generating principle behind the seemingly disparate material before them. Beuys' objects and images are not so unfamiliar that they would warrant being termed abstract, but rather appear to be informed by a sensibility particular to the individual. Beuys' reconceiving of the art object within himself results in the individual being subject to the same scrutiny accorded to the object.

### Just who was that man in the felt hat?

Beuys' appropriation of history disrupts an unquestioning faith in its ability to contain the past. His use of materials imbued with a prior existence dependent upon the artist challenges their autonomy, rendering them incomplete. It is the uncertainty of the role he himself performs, however, that effects the most concerted disruption of form. In attempting to determine Beuys' position, accommodating him within some existing frame of reference, commentators attempt to subsume his

activities by recourse to pre-determined roles and the work of other practitioners. Critical approaches to Beuys rarely fail to embrace both his conventional artistic endeavours and the various manifestations of his beliefs, though frequently one is used to support or denigrate the other. It is one of many ironies surrounding the artist that even the most damning indictment of his work is invariably engaged in a discourse beyond the narrow parameters of art criticism, adding weight to his expanded concept of art.<sup>27</sup> Beuys' refusal to limit his endeavours to those which the critics and commentators of the art world might consider as constituting their area of competence signals the disparity between the view of art propounded by Beuys and that extolled by galleries and museums built to house specific objects. To refrain from engaging on Beuys' terms, hostile and bemused critics place him within the context of other artists such as Marcel Duchamp, Yves Klien and Andy Warhol whose lives are intermingled with their art. Where these artists invite the beholder to consider their social and economic activities as further instances of an artistic project, Beuys declares his entire life to be artistic endeavour, not as a consequence of extending an aesthetic frame around otherwise commonplace or unremarkable phenomena but by making its limitations those of the individual engaged in the world.

That Beuys continued to work and built up a reputation as "the most visible post-war European artist, and, to many, the most important"<sup>28</sup>, even as he campaigned for the mantle of artist to be wrested from an elite and be propagated in each individual, is one of many paradoxes arising from any attempt to place Joseph Beuys in relation to prevailing structures. Other artists, including Morris and Kaprow, sought to evade unquestioning adherence to the representational model of the past through the construction of circumstances in which it was, at best, only one of many ways of relating to the object, at worst, no longer tenable. Beuys, however, is not content

to challenge or renounce the ability of the past to shape his current circumstances, choosing instead to make the past dependant on his present activities.

In an action entitled *How to explain pictures to a dead hare* (1965)<sup>29</sup>, Beuys, his hat replaced by an application of honey and gold leaf over his entire head, carried a dead hare around an exhibition of his works (see plate 26), telling the animal of their significance. The public



Plate 26. Joseph Beuys. *How to explain pictures to a dead hare* (performance)  
Galerie Schmela, Dusseldorf, 26 November 1965

were only able to view the work from a doorway or a street window, a restriction that called attention to the activity of watching. Beuys described the work as "a complex tableau about the problem of language"<sup>30</sup>, a subject he is able to broach by disrupting the transmission of meaning on various levels. Though Beuys subsequently remarked that "even a dead animal preserves more powers of intuition than some human beings with their stubborn rationality"<sup>31</sup> it would be reductive to see the performance as primarily a rebuke to the audience. Beuys places them in a situation where comprehension of the piece within a visual or discursive framework is problematic. The beholder is prevented from extracting the information promised by the title - the explanation of the pictures - as they are unable to hear the words that Beuys silently mouths to the dead animal. That the work cannot be confined to language is evident from the richness of the visual elements, not only Beuys' appearance but objects such as the 'radio' made from bone and electrical components under a wooden stool with a felt leg. Even considering the work as a performance that incorporates both visual and discursive elements is questionable, as Beuys' attention to the dead animal invites the beholder to consider herself alternately within and outside of the terms of what is occurring. The beholder is both a member of an audience for whom the performance was intended and an observer of a dialogue to which she has no formal access. Beuys "explains" the pictures only in the sense that he places them in a context where language is shown to be inadequate. The moment of explanation is not submerged beneath the narrative but instead generates such a degree of 'noise' that the narrative is 'inaudible'. The bone and wire radio can be regarded as embodying the stifling of language by its necessary visual element; as a means of communication it appears to be useless unless one considers it as operating in a medium other than the discursive. Even as Beuys reveals to the hare the pictures' explanation he invests them with further significance through the very distinctive



means by which they are explained. It looks towards Lyotard's notion of the *event*, in that the act of explaining the pictures is not tautological with their explanation. Beuys himself might be regarded as the figural element of the work, both within and against the ostensible discourse. In such a conception of the work, the part played by Beuys no longer has to be inside (performer) or outside (artist) that which constitutes the work but is necessarily both simultaneously. The indeterminate condition of Beuys does not operate in isolation but has repercussions for the status of the object.

To regard Beuys as a performer is less problematic than viewing him as an artist insofar as it accounts for his presence in the work, renders his outfit a costume and posits the objects he interacts with as props. Difficulties persist, however, when the beholder attempts to apply a judgement to the performance, as the frame that would delineate the performer from his role is not apparent. In *Infiltration-homogen for grand piano, the greatest living composer is a thalidomide child* (1966)<sup>32</sup> Beuys covered a grand piano with felt. The piano was subsequently displayed in a gallery, thus retrospectively altering the nature of the circumstances from which it arose, from that which entertains the beholder to that which is efficacious, yielding results outside of the spatial and temporal limits of its occurrence. If Beuys' activity of covering the piano is considered as a performance, then the subsequent display of the object arising could be construed as a continuation of the circumstances instigated at the time of its construction, perpetuating the belief in Beuys as playing the role of artist. At this point the performative circumstances undergo a radical transformation, as the beholder no longer finds herself attending to a fictive construction but, instead, as an element within its terms. As audience member she validates the theatrical *frame*, but before the felt-covered piano in a gallery she is authenticating the *conceit* (Beuys performing the role of artist) underscoring the originating performance.

The centrality of the artist in Beuys' work is undoubtedly connected to his enthusiasm for the writers of the German Romantic tradition<sup>33</sup>. There is a degree of concordance with the expressive theory of art criticism adumbrated by M.H. Abrams, "in which the artist himself becomes the major element generating both the artistic product and the criteria by which it is to be judged"<sup>34</sup>. However, the presence of Beuys in such works, either literally, or as the instigator of objects of insufficient autonomy to avoid recourse to their creator, does not constitute "the internal made external"<sup>35</sup>. In place of an unknowable inner core of feeling, able to gain expression through the object, Beuys offers both source and expression of the same simultaneously. Rather than permit the object to speak of his condition, and, as with the mimetic, become the conduit of a value system limited to recalling the past, Beuys challenges the authority of his work to speak of himself through the presence of that 'self' in the work. The object is not simply usurped by Beuys' presence as "authentic article" as both Beuys and the object depend upon each other for the establishment of identity.

Whether viewed as artist or performer, Beuys refuses to accede to the accepted prerequisites of such terms, defined by, and articulating themselves through, a body of work that is distinct from them as individuals. This provokes the beholder to search for the point at which the distinction between artist and performer may be made, a point of entry which would allow them to distinguish between the work and the artist. The work, in isolation, would allow the application of judgement; the indivisibility of work and artist conflates and confuses - and, in the presence of the artist, suspends - a variety of different frames of reference by which Beuys might be known. This shift - from a self-sufficient object to one that marks a stage in a process that may or may not be complete - is the fundamental premise upon which Beuys

proceeds, encapsulated in his introductory statement for the catalogue of the Guggenheim Museum retrospective, quoted in full below:

My objects are to be seen as stimulants for the transformation of the idea of sculpture, or of art in general. They should provoke thoughts about what sculpture **can** be and how the concept of sculpting can be extended to the invisible materials used by everyone:

**Thinking Forms** -            how we mould our thoughts or

**Spoken Forms** -            how we shape our thoughts into words or

**SOCIAL SCULPTURE** -    how we mould and shape the world in which we live:

**Sculpture as an evolutionary process; everyone an artist.**

That is why the nature of my sculpture is not fixed and finished. Processes continue in most of them: chemical reactions, fermentations, colour changes, decay, drying up. Everything is in a **state of change**.<sup>36</sup>

Though he refers to changes brought about without human intervention, 'social sculpture' is predicated on the involvement of the individual interacting with a malleable environment. The three forms, culminating in 'social sculpture', which looks toward transformation on a global scale, are associated with the sculptural process, arising from moulding and shaping. Where Beuys departs from the analogy is in considering the *process* of value rather than the ensuing product. This is achieved in part by a rejection of the sculptural illusionism that Rosalind

Krauss recognises as one of the casualties of Minimalist sculpture. According to Krauss, this illusionism

converts one material into the signifier for another: stone, for example, into flesh - an illusionism that withdraws the sculptural object from literal space and places it in a metaphorical one.<sup>37</sup>

The materials employed in each of the stages identified by Beuys - 'thoughts', 'words' and 'the world in which we live' - are not transmogrified by the intervention of the artist, so that they are to be considered apart from the literal, but instead retain a dependence upon the circumstances from which they arose. When, in 1964, Beuys proposed that the Berlin Wall be raised by five centimetres, his words were not consigned to the esoteric realm reserved for artist's proclamations but prompted widespread response, including questions from the Ministry of the Interior for North Rhine Westphalia enquiring as to his intentions<sup>38</sup>. In reply, Beuys suggested that he wished to reappropriate a structure that had become a perceptual as well as a physical barrier. His aim was to redirect attention "to the mental Wall and how to overcome it".<sup>39</sup> The knowledge that Beuys was an artist and the impracticality of the proposal invite consideration of it within an aesthetic frame, but both the seriousness and efficacy of its intent suggests that any such frame must encompass the events and circumstances it addresses rather than comment on them from a cultural enclave. It is the ambivalence of Beuys' position - at once both conventional artist engaged in cultural activities and also instigator of consequential social and political acts - rather than the objects or acts themselves - that is the most considered creation of the man. Though the terms "artist" and "performer" are sufficiently broad to embrace individuals as diverse as Leonardo da Vinci and Marcel Duchamp and exponents of kathakali and commedia dell' arte, they circumscribe the

efficaciousness of the individual so engaged. Rather than synthesising or transgressing either of these roles, Beuys places them alongside that of the shaman, a figure even more entrenched in the dictates of the past, yet able to evade the elicitation of instinctual response by the very disparity of such a role in a twentieth-century context.

### The contemporary shaman

The powers of healing and regeneration, and the older concept of Eurasia, that embraces the Crimea, combine in the Siberian shaman, whose mythology Beuys draws upon and renders his own.<sup>40</sup> From his drawings in the early fifties, through the embodiment in performances and public appearances, the figure of the shaman occupies an increasingly important position in Beuys' activities. A religious phenomenon, shamanism's origins are primarily located in the tribal societies of Siberia and Central Asia (of which the Crimea is part). The shaman was recruited either through hereditary transmission or by the decree of the gods. Before he could fulfil his vocation, the shaman had to undergo an initiation, which, following the schema for all such ceremonies, involved the passage from suffering, through death to eventual resurrection. In his seminal work on shamanism, Mircea Eliade observes that

...this ecstatic type of experience is always and everywhere followed by theoretical and practical instruction at the hands of the old masters; but that does not make it any the less determinate, for it is the ecstatic experience that radically changes the religious status of the "chosen" person.<sup>41</sup>

After a period of instruction, the shaman is able to perform his duties, which encompass those of the magician, the healer, the priest,

the mystic and the poet. He is aided and abetted in his tasks by familiars or helpers that might include bears, wolves, stags and hares. Clear parallels exist between the shaman and Beuys' projection of himself, notably the alleged near-death experience of the plane crash and the period of instruction culminating in the intense study and subsequent mental instability evasively referred to as "working in the fields" in *Life Course/Work Course*.<sup>42</sup> From the mid 1960s, he began intervening in matters traditionally considered the preserve of politicians rather than artists, thus inviting an understanding of his work in the context of the shaman, someone who proffers guidance. Though there is evidence to suggest that the shaman is the antecedent of the mimetic tradition<sup>43</sup>, his role in the twentieth century is not efficacious, but seen in the context of the entertainer, providing diversions from, rather than solutions to, the problems of the world. For Beuys, the figure of the shaman allows him to engage with aesthetic, scientific and economic concerns without seeming to be constrained by their terms, or having to regard them as mutually exclusive. However, the purpose of assuming such a role is not merely the blurring of boundaries between spheres of activity but also to intercede in a society he considers to have lost the ability to shape its own destiny. Expressed in his Theory of Sculpture, outlined below, it manifests itself in the imposition of a middle ground between the polarities of formlessness and form, a shifting state that, in evading the clutches of either, is typified by activity, the play of appearance and disappearance.

*Coyote: I like America and America Likes Me*,<sup>44</sup> (plate 27) a much discussed action from the mid 1970s, shows Beuys to be embracing the roles of educator and entertainer in equal measure. In May 1974, Beuys flew into New York and was transported from the airport wrapped in a felt shroud within an ambulance to the René Block Gallery. From the time of his arrival until his departure in similar fashion, Beuys engaged in a dialogue with a coyote. Animal and artist were enclosed by a wire

fence through which visitors to the gallery could observe their behaviour. Caroline Tisdall's description of the performance considers at some length the accumulated resonances of the work, drawing on both Beuys' and the coyote's mythology<sup>45</sup>, yet accounts and photographs of the piece invite consideration of it less as an encounter between two different but known entities than the performing of identity.

Rather than regard an internal tension within the work, between civilised man - and wild animal, or that arising from the familiar confronting the unknown, the beholder is invited to consider herself as a constituent of the contrasting element of the work, which extends into the whole of the space. The room in which the performance occurs is permeated by the noise from the streets below and the divide between audience and performer is achieved not by the illusion of the performance detaching itself from the rest of the world<sup>46</sup> but by a tangible wire fence. The siting of the performance within the circumstances of the beholder is not entirely self-evident but also articulated in an oblique manner: every day fifty copies of the current edition of *The Wall Street Journal* were placed in the performing space. Their transformation from conduits of information to indifferent material to be alternately explored, torn up and excreted on by the coyote is indicative of the divide between those on one side of the wire and those on the other. Clearly, Beuys is able to engage with the system of values beyond his cage, yet, as with the possibility of communicating to the beholder of *How to Explain pictures to a Dead Hare*, in doing so he is constrained by the means through which he might speak. In using established channels of communication - the art object, manifestos and dialogues - he is liable to the strictures by which they operate and maintain their prominence. As with an earlier performance, *Iphigenie/Titus Andronicus* (1969)<sup>47</sup>, a theatre piece performed by Beuys and a white horse (plate 28), the production and consumption of elements by artist and audience respectively is disrupted by the



Plate 27. Joseph Beuys. *I like America and America Likes Me* (also known as *Coyote*) (Performance, Réne Block Gallery, New York, May 1974)



Plate 28. Joseph Beuys. *Iphigenie/Titus Andronicus Experimenta 3 Theatre Festival*, Frankfurt, May 1969.



presence of another - in this instance a coyote - whose means of communication and level of understanding differs from that of those regarding the work. In both instances, Beuys' refusal to project the distinction between himself and animal as content, frustrates an unspoken complicity between artist and beholder arising from their engagement in an art activity.

Though the nature of Beuys' action marks a divide between himself and the beholder, this distance is contextualised by his occasional departures from the animal he shared the space with to "chat with a friend through the barrier and to down a glass of shocking-pink five-fruit flavour Hawaiian Punch"<sup>48</sup>. Beuys is not so much "in role" and "out of role", as a role *per se*, and it is left to the beholder to determine whether his actions are motivated by furthering the realisation of a predetermined figure - "the shaman", "the teacher", "the artist" - or whether they are the sum and, consequently, the negation of these individual elements that he quotes in performance. The acting out of behaviour associated with particular figures is another instance of appealing to a past that never was; the ongoing presentation of self that is overburdened with identity (and is thus problematic) creates a space of what could be regarded as mutual doubt. Similarly, with the banalities, contradictions and lapses that are evident in his dialogues and discussions, there is a sense that it is a point of entry into the work rather than proof of its inadequacy. As Beuys states

In art there is absolutely nothing to understand, simply nothing. The only sign that fits art is this: a question mark. What does a painting by Mondrian mean? It means just exactly what is there and what is there is always a question mark.<sup>49</sup>

The move toward this condition in the work of Beuys is a result of a complex interaction between the artist, the object and the audience. It

is tempting at this point, recognising that the mantle of shaman/teacher/artist is so easily assumed by Beuys, to regard the amalgamation of these roles as equally considered. The beholder, then, is once again engaging in a futile search for a point of origin, the *real* Beuys. She is faced with the choice of settling for a conception of the man at the *n*th remove, one that would appear to be the bedrock of all the evasions that rest on top of it, or regarding the enterprise as inconclusive, like searching for the other side of a Möbius strip.

If the beholder attends to the work as pointing away from itself, then the status of what occurs through the duration of the performance is questioned. Jackson Pollock's action-paintings can be seen as inviting the beholder to regard them as the record of an activity that was completed, rather than as autonomous objects<sup>50</sup>. The function of the painting then becomes one of enabling the activity to be known. The painting, however, does not *re-fer* to the event as something that can be known to have occurred, because it is in the regarding of the painting that the event is constructed; rather, the invitation to accept the coexistence of event and object within the object itself creates a situation analogous to that found in Beuys' work, that of *de-ferral from*. The present, as previously suggested, is not a space for the endless playing out of the past but the moment from which the past can be constructed. With Beuys, use of the term 'past' is an insufficient means of referring to the amalgam of the beholder's and the artist's association of elements, at times so entwined that it is difficult to distinguish the newly-coined 'past' of Beuys' invention from the collective unconscious. The critic Robert Hughes regards the evocation of the primitive as the fundamental principle of Beuys' work, concerned with

the excavation of memory, layer on layer of it, transferred into metaphor: these mock-shamanistic rituals, this fiddling about with sticks and fat, bones and rust, blood (or at

least Blutwurst), coarse felt, mud, gold, magicians' wands and dead animals, are meant to embody a state of premodernist consciousness. Beuys' imagery of survival is intensely romantic and archaising. It looks back to the days when artists were daubing ocher on cave walls and skinning hares with their teeth. It is full of nostalgia for the lost centrality of art<sup>51</sup>

To view Beuys as simply retrieving tarnished arcana is to disregard the ambivalent relationship the artist develops with his primitive materials. The displacement of conventional artistic materials by those used for construction (Robert Morris' plywood, felt and aluminium works, for example), employed in the course of one's existence (Duchamp's urinal, Kaprow's 'borrowing' of behaviour in the Activities) or seemingly unsuited to their task (Claes Oldenburg's 'soft sculptures'<sup>52</sup>) serves to situate the "strangeness" or "otherness" of the art work outside the domain of the object and make it a function of the relationship between object and beholder. With Beuys, the work's alterity is a consequence of the artist's refusal to either quote or subsume the primitive. *Coyote* does not convey the meeting of the wild and the civilised; Beuys and the animal are engaged in the process of accommodating each other. Fat and felt are not presented in their raw, unmediated state, nor are their particular qualities unduly suppressed; instead, Beuys finds a median position which permits expression of his own nature and that of the material he works with. This notion of engaging with material finds its most cogent expression in *Fat Chair*<sup>53</sup> (see plate 29), poised, according to Caroline Tisdall, between the two poles of Beuys' Theory of Sculpture<sup>54</sup> that incorporate any mental or physical entity, the chaotic and the ordered:

**Chaotic** is the state of raw material and unchannelled will power, characterised as WARM. **Ordered** is the state of



Plate 29. Joseph Beuys. *Fat chair*. 1964 90 x 30 x 30 cm Wooden chair with fat

material that has been processed or formed... characterised as COLD and INTELLECTUAL.<sup>55</sup>

Sculpture, as Beuys understands the term, is the movement between these two states. Recast in tabular structure, the binary opposition invites the addition of the terms "performer" and "object" to its list:

chaos		order
undetermined		determined
organic	movement	crystalline
warm		cold
expansion		contraction <sup>56</sup>

How Beuys mediates between the two states hinges on the understanding of the creative act; whether it is completed by its occurrence, or its product. The definitions of the word make this distinction quite succinctly - **create**; [1] ...give rise to; [2] originate,<sup>57</sup> - the first looking forward to a product, giving rise to *something*, the second describing an act. If this distinction is used to separate object and performer then emphasis shifts from formal differences to the status of the artist and his actions, as either the agency, or the focus, of, creation; the point at which Beuys is present in his works he is both. To insist on Beuys as both source and object arising is problematic, as one tends to obscure the other. This invites one to consider Beuys' actions as formative, occurring at the point at which meaning is assigned, not only in relation to the beholder's understanding of the artist but to the objects themselves. Performance then becomes the correlative of the object; where the object persists independent of a concurrent or prior activity it can be said to be autonomous - its justification is its existence, but at the point where activity is implied or evident in relation to the object its status becomes contingent upon it. The interrelationship is noted by Kier Elam, using the term 'ostension', in *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*;

In order to refer to, indicate or define a given object, one simply picks it up and shows it to the receiver of the message in question...Eco has argued that this elementary form of signifying is 'the most basic instance of performance'. Semiotization involves the *showing* of objects

and events (and the performance at large) to the audience, rather than describing, explaining or defining them.<sup>58</sup>

Where theatrical ostension is dependent on the performer or the object possessing a stable meaning - through one the audience may know the other - neither Beuys nor his objects are fixed; their interdependence creates a situation in which the beholder is constantly referred from one to the other in the search for meaning. The extent to which the work's instability is predicated on the transforming consciousness of the artist over time is only fully apparent, the nascent organic characteristics of his objects only discernible, when the artist ceases to exist.

### The mortality of the object

Beuys' work has been likened to that of the Minimalists<sup>59</sup>, assimilated within Fluxus<sup>60</sup> and otherwise assigned a place within the canon, a position that he rejects. Though he exhibits no reluctance in tracing a distinguished, if eclectic, lineage of like-minded souls that embraces, amongst others, the German Romantics, James Joyce and Rudolph Steiner, he explicitly distances himself from Marcel Duchamp. *The silence of Marcel Duchamp is overrated*<sup>61</sup> arises from Beuys' scepticism concerning Duchamp's Anti-art concept, though in choosing to speak of the "noise" of Beuys<sup>62</sup>, the critic Robert Hughes at once suggests the divergent approaches of the artists and also the sense that both are united in providing more than simply visual stimulation, something in excess of the limits of the object. With the Readymades, Duchamp questioned whether the profession of artist was synonymous with that of artisan. Defending *Fountain*, the urinal he entered for an open sculpture exhibition under the pseudonym Richard Mutt, Duchamp clearly favours the mentation of the artist over any manipulation of an

external object: "Whether Mr Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it."<sup>63</sup> The more vocal Beuys presents this reorientation of the role of the artist within the context of his expanded notion of art:

If art does not invent, if its comprehension does not innovate on the level of the "art-idea" the art of painting or sculpting will certainly not do so. This problem has nothing to do with the passage from body art to minimal art or to conceptual art. These are only so-called innovations. They are reactionary within their own isolation, like a train on its rails, or a truck on its road.<sup>64</sup>

Within the statement, Beuys posits a notion of art that is removed from the formal qualities of disciplines such as painting and sculpting. Furthermore, the "art-idea" distances itself from developments such as body art, minimal art and conceptual art where it might be argued that the prevailing representational attributes of art cede to the necessary intervention of the beholder. By imposing a historically contrary condition on the theory of Beuys, declaring that everything *now*, rather than at some point in the future, has the quality of art, then the difficulties they present the beholder with can be regarded from a different perspective. Firstly, the "art-idea" is no longer seen in isolation, as another departure from painting or sculpture, but instead can be viewed as any creative impulse. Secondly, if creativity has an equal or superior status to a self-regulating, self-perpetuating, economic structure then what are regarded as Beuys' more fanciful ideas, such as the raising of the Berlin Wall by five centimetres to give it better proportions, cannot be discarded or marginalised on the grounds that they are artistic or non-functional because the process of thought takes precedence over the usefulness of the product. Such a situation could easily be declared unworkable from a rational perspective, but then the premises of such a

position would foreclose the possibility of anything that contradicted it; it is more useful to consider Beuys the artist in such a hypothetical environment. His actions, objects and declarations are attended to at present because their lack of discernible function places emphasis on the creative impulse from which they spring, rendering them apart from, and a commentary on, that which exists outside of them. If the same were to be true of those from other disciplines, Beuys-as-artist could only exist by reinstating the functionally purposeless product as a means of distinguishing him from other individuals who are also creative but happen to produce objects that serve some discernible function. The alternative, and one that accords with the absence generated by his work, is that the artist is not primarily concerned with Art as a self-contained entity but requires it as a formal discipline by which that which cannot be known can be acknowledged, so that while creativity in other fields tends toward the development of that particular area, the artist must address the process of creativity itself. This requires the ability to hold both the process of creation and its product together at the same moment, a concern that is apparent in an interview Beuys gave in 1970;

There are certain signs, at the moment I'd like to call them "threshold-signs" or...for instance in St John's Gospel, it is said "In the beginning was the word"...In that sense of the idea the word was logos. What does logos do? It starts the process of evolution. Finally, how does a word, or I also call it a threshold-sign become matter? How does it become a real live person?

For me those are significant questions. They reach way back and are, first of all, represented by and continue to have a psychic effect through my performances, above all through the character of felt and fat.<sup>65</sup>



While he regards this coming into being as reaching "way back", within the context of the performances this is more a conceptual rather than temporal distancing, *out* of time, rather than at its inception. The concept of logos embraces the antithesis between unity and plurality, allowing the creative impulse to manifest itself in the world despite its transcendence.<sup>66</sup> The performances are Beuys' clearest indication of this process, containing within the constituent parts the indivisibility of the whole, but with the emphasis maintained on the *how* rather than the *what* of creation; *I like America...* is both Joseph Beuys and something that cannot be him, for it exists apart as a piece of work. Similarly, the character of felt and fat is both something that is evident in its physical presence but is not its presence alone.

The danger with applying Beuys' theories is the tendency to regard them as overreaching, encompassing all within their grasp, as one is similarly inclined to regard the figure of the shaman and the primitive appeal of works such as *Lightning with Stag in its Glare*<sup>67</sup> as indicative of a linear notion of time, with a point of origin from which all else stems. Conversely, it would be a simplification to declare that these grand narratives - "stories that claim "the status of universal metanarrative, capable of accounting for all other stories in order to reveal their true meaning"<sup>68</sup> - are quoted in order that they may be seen to be false; falsehood is dependent on a verifiable truth by which it can be condemned. Instead, Beuys empties out the present with elaborate constructions of past, for example *The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland* and future, whilst acknowledging through his presence that it *is* in the present that meaning is generated. The efficacious shaman and every-living-being-as-artist are conditions in which the beholder is drawn to observe the contingent status of representation; sites where the mimetic will not hold. On returning to the continuous present, the beholder observes that the work persists, still under the guise of the

representational, but is in a position to acknowledge the lure of its deferral, and even resist.

While it would appear that Beuys deliberately leaves no room for the participant to generate meanings, having provided so many of his own, their failure to connect, not only with one another but with some underlying concept. This requires the beholder to suppress the desire for closure, and in so doing, continually to return to the present in favour of a past or future that promises revelation. In this way, both artist and beholder are engaged in a process of reaching the present, some point of actuality, not by accepting that it simply *is*, and therefore unable to do anything but participate in its inevitable continuation, but by dealing with *what it is not*, and *moving* to a point where engagement and detachment, creativity and that which is created, can be regarded simultaneously. Viewed in this manner, Beuys' work does not expand art into the realm of that which it is not, nor destroy the distinction between the two, but instead looks toward a situation in which art both pervades the world that continues around its frame and provides a means of looking at it. John Cage's notion of the relationship between art and theatre is roughly comparable - "Theatre takes place all the time wherever one is and art simply facilitates persuading one this is the case"<sup>69</sup> - though Cage admits that the process of reaching this position is less an active striving than a willingness to accept its existence;

Our intention is to affirm this life, not to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvements in creation, but simply to wake up to the very life we're living, which is so excellent once one gets one's mind and one's desires out of its way and lets it act of its own accord.<sup>70</sup>

Beuys' dictum "ART = MAN"<sup>71</sup> suggests an equivalence that is not evident in Cage's enabling quality of art. Though Beuys' work appears

all-embracing, that which is not contained within it is to be located at its centre, the absence it looks toward. Rather than the sparseness of some of his pieces, it is the lack of an informing principle at the heart of the work that links Beuys with Minimalism. Where Robert Morris deals with materials that exhibit only a surface without an implicit point of generation, so Beuys presents symbols, icons and myths that lack a founding principle. This is not to accuse him of superficiality, because the associations and resonances of the work are innumerable, but rather to regard them as an element in a more complex strategy. The various elements of the performances, including the artist, look away from their present condition, evoking a past that never was; what remains is a continuous present where the act of creation can occur without recourse to historicity (re-presentation).

If the artist is free to *present* rather than to invoke what has gone before, then attention shifts from attending to objects with assignable meanings gleaned from the past to the active creation of self in the world. The invitation is to look beyond the object, whether inanimate or organic, by positing it as closed and ultimately inaccessible in favour of the undecideable; not in the sense of having a plurality of meanings (although this is not ruled out) but in the sense of *becoming*, which elevates the status of the activity over its product. The notion of the logos - Beuys' 'threshold-signs' - allows that the creator and the creation be distinct and yet indivisible, so that the activity is not contingent and, ultimately, apart from the ensuing object, but within it. It can be seen that this notion of creativity, that elevates the activity over the product, might remove the distinctions between the artist and those from other disciplines which rest on the function or lack of function of their resultant products.

Beuys' use of art, then, is ironic, utilising its structure of representation to invalidate itself, but simultaneously wishing to adopt its concern with creativity, not as it manifests itself in objects, but as an act, a state of becoming that is not concluded by, but is contemporaneous with, and indivisible from, that which arises from it. As closure is indefinitely deferred, the application of judgement is thwarted. The continued activity of Beuys in relation to his objects and performances, whether through conscious alteration or by further explication of the project from which they arise, inhibits responding to them as discrete elements.

The death of the artist in 1986 inevitably terminated the proliferation of ambiguity surrounding his work. As a consequence, what remained after his death could be addressed as a body of work, though it is notable that some critics felt that the work was impoverished by the absence of its creator. Writing of the preparations for a major Beuys exhibition in Berlin in 1988, David Galloway observed:

Sceptics were quick to express doubts about the feasibility of the undertaking - whether, without Beuys' magic touch and messianic presence, a true retrospective (of the kind staged by the Guggenheim Museum in 1979) was really possible.<sup>72</sup>

From being relics of a past continually manipulated and altered by their creator, Beuys' objects now exist in a collective past, subject to the same considerations and means of assessment applied to other objects. The uncertain status of a work such as *Pt Co Fe* is replaced by absence as content, taking refuge, as Lyotard suggests, in the "solace of good forms"<sup>73</sup>. This is not to suggest that Beuys can be judged as an exemplar of Modernist art rather than engaging with the postmodern. Instead, because Beuys' project is so inextricably linked with his life,

approaching it historically denies it the organic quality that sets it apart from the self-sufficient art work. Even the postmodern artist, as conceived by Lyotard, "working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what will have been done"<sup>74</sup>, is concerned with a bounding mechanism - 'formulating the rules'- that is not recognised by Beuys.

While Beuys displays an "incredulity toward metanarratives"<sup>75</sup>, he does not supplant them with "discontinuous, catastrophic, nonrectifiable and paradoxical" heterogeneous units Lyotard terms "little narratives"<sup>76</sup>. Instead, he champions a single, all-encompassing narrative, art, that in its inclusivity does not allow for an oppositional stance. For all its breadth, however, there are very evident limits to Beuys' social sculpture, namely the birth and death of the individual, and perhaps, more pressingly, an unanswered concern. The individual, in Beuys' understanding, is not historically determined, but chooses to treat the past as one more element that can be shaped and moulded as an expression of their creativity. Such empowerment, denied the checks of a resistant system, has no means to judge itself. As practised by Beuys it is apparent in benign interventions such as *7000 Oaks*<sup>77</sup> and justified by patient explanation: it remains to be seen whether "the repressive effects of a senile social system"<sup>78</sup> are a consequence of the system or the people of which it is composed.

Beuys' legacy does not reside in the objects and documentation that survive him, but rather in the extent to which they seem incomplete and impoverished, their ability to present and construct themselves through association with their creator reduced to representation of what is known to have past. Despite the convergence of his work with various styles and movements during his life, similarities based on formal characteristics, such as that between his and Morris' use of felt, are irrelevant as a consequence of the German artist's disruption of form

through the predominance of his own persona, privileging the activity of sculpture (in his expanded sense), a working-through of form, over concern for the products generated as a result.

1 Robert Morris attempted to confront the value of the work of art  
through the Peripatetic Artists Guild, charging a "\$25.00 per working  
hour wage plus all travel, materials, construction and other costs" to  
the "owner-sponsor", whilst Kaprow wrestles with the relationship  
between art and income in a number of essays. (see Morris'  
advertisement for the Peripatetic Artist's Guild, November 1970,  
reprinted in Berger, Maurice. Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism,  
and the 1960s. New York: Harper & Row, 1989 fig 48, p94. and  
Kaprow, Allan. "Should the Artist become a man of the world?" Art  
News Vol.63 no 6 October 1964. pp.34-7,58

2 Greenberg, Clement. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch." Partisan Review. Vol.  
vi no 5 Fall 1939 pp.34-49. reprinted in Frascina, Francis (ed.)  
Pollock and After. London: Harper and Row, 1985. p24

3 Mackintosh, Alastair. "Beuys in Edinburgh." Art and Artists. November  
1970. p10.

4 see Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical  
Reproduction." originally published in Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung  
Vol.V no 1. New York 1936 reprinted in Benjamin, Walter.  
Illuminations. Arendt, H (ed.) London: 1973. pp 219-53

5 Between 1961 and 1963 Beuys wrote a number of "stage plays" that  
evolved from his botanical lists. see Temkin, Ann "Joseph Beuys: Life  
Drawing" in Temkin, Ann, and Bernice Rose (eds) Thinking is Form:  
The Drawings of Joseph Beuys. London: Thames and Hudson, 1993  
p51.

6 Rickey, Carrie. "Where the Beuys are." The Village Voice 26  
November 1979 p99.

7 Lyotard, Jean-François. "Answering the Question What is  
Postmodernism?" in Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern  
Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans Regis Durand. Manchester:  
Manchester University Press, 1984. p81

8 Joseph Beuys. Lebenslauf/Werklauf [Life Course/Work Course]. 1964.  
The text first appeared in the program notes for the "Festival der neuen  
Kunst" in Aachen on July 20, 1964. The translation used here comes  
from Adriani, Gotz, Winnifred Konnertz and Karin Thomas. Joseph  
Beuys: Life and Works. trans Patricia Lech. Cologne: Barron's  
Educational Series Inc., 1973. pp 5-7.

9 Kim Levin notes that hers was one of several books on the artist  
abandoned, in her case because Beuys "insisted through an  
intermediary on censorship rights". (see Levin, Kim. "Art: Beuys: The  
Last Work." The Village Voice 18 February 1986 p95.)

10 see Tisdall, Caroline. Joseph Beuys. New York and London: Thames  
and Hudson, 1979 pp 16-17.

11 Adriani, Konnertz & Thomas. Joseph Beuys p16

12 Tisdall, Caroline. Joseph Beuys pp 16-17.

13 see Benjamin Buchloh's investigation of Beuys' "myth of origin".  
(Buchloh, Benjamin H. D. "Beuys: The Twilight of the Idol." Artforum.  
January 1980 pp 35-41.)

14 Donald Kuspit observes that the cold year (1945) coincides with the  
defeat of Germany in the war and Beuys' repatriation after being a  
prisoner of war in Russia, whilst the following, "warm" year (1946) is  
notable in that it was the period when Beuys' decided to become an  
artist. (see Kuspit, Donald. "Joseph Beuys: The body of the artist."  
Artforum. Summer 1991. p80.)

15 George Brecht quoted in Mayor, D. Fluxshoe. Devon: Beau Geste  
Press, 1972. p3.

- 16 Joseph Beuys. *Kukei/Akopee-nein/Brown cross/Fat corners/Model fat corners*. action. Aachen. 20 July 1964.
- 17 Joseph Beuys in Kunst Magazin October 1964. quoted in Tisdall, Caroline Joseph Beuys p92
- 18 Joseph Beuys *Chief Fluxus Song*. performance. Réne Block Gallery, Berlin. 1964. Also known as *The Chief*, and *The Chief - Fluxus chant*.
- 19 Meyer, Ursula. "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare: Joseph Beuys: Actions." Art News. Vol.68. January 1970. pp.56-57.
- 20 Morris had met Beuys in 1964 in Düsseldorf, where the arrangements for the joint work were made. (Interview with Robert Morris by the author 4/11/92, New York.)
- 21 Taylor, Mark C. "Back to the Future." in Silverman, Hugh J. (ed.) Continental Philosophy III: Postmodernism - Philosophy and the Arts. New York and London: Routledge, 1990. pp.16-17.
- 22 Joseph Beuys. *Pt Co Fe*. 1948-72. 250 x 200 x 50 cm platinum, cobalt and iron.
- 23 Joseph Beuys. Inscription on *Pt Co Fe*, cited in Tisdall, Caroline. Joseph Beuys p26
- 24 *Braunkreuz*, a brown pigment that Beuys employed from the early 1960s, frequently in the form of a brown cross, is often used to modify existing images - both the artist's own, such as *QCG Land Procedures Crossed Four Times* (1941/63) and over newsprint and photographs. The brown cross is also used in the manner of a trademark on many of Beuys' multiples (for a discussion of Beuys' use of *braunkreuz* see Temkin, Ann. "Joseph Beuys: Life Drawing." esp. pp.37-42.)
- 25 see Beuys, Joseph. Joseph Beuys: The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland. Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, 1974.
- 26 Joseph Beuys speaking at the Oxford opening of the exhibition, *The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland*, quoted in Temkin, Ann. "Joseph Beuys: Life Drawing." p63.
- 27 The discussion of Beuys' retrospective at the Guggenheim by three critics from the journal October, though for the most part sceptical of Beuys' importance, is notable for the breadth of its argument. (see Buchloh, Benjamin H. D., Rosalind Krauss and Annette Michelson. "Joseph Beuys at the Guggenheim." October. Vol.12 Spring 1980. pp.3-21.)
- 28 Rickey, Carrie. "Where the Beuys are." p99.
- 29 Joseph Beuys. *How to explain pictures to a dead hare*. (performance) Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf, 26 November 1965.
- 30 Joseph Beuys in Beuys, Joseph. Joseph Beuys. Zeichnungen 1 1947-59. Cologne: Schirmer/Mosel, 1972. cited in Tisdall, Caroline Joseph Beuys p101
- 31 *ibid*, p105.
- 32 Joseph Beuys. *Infiltration homogen for grand piano, the greatest contemporary composer is the thalidomide child*. Staatliche Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, July 7 1966. The work was subsequently displayed as *Infiltration-homogen for grand piano*. (1966 Bechstein piano covered with felt.)
- 33 In an introductory essay on Beuys, Ann Temkin notes that the artist read widely, particularly during the 1950s when experiencing a profound spiritual crisis. She cites the writings of Schiller, Novalis and arising from this, those of Rudolph Steiner as central to the development of Beuys thinking. He both acknowledges the influence of



German Romanticism and distinguishes it from his own thinking in an interview in 1971 with Achille Bonito Oliva (see Temkin, Ann, "Joseph Beuys: An Introduction to His Life and Work," in Temkin, Ann & Bernice Rose, Thinking is Form, p13 and Oliva, Achille B. "A Score by Joseph Beuys: We are the revolution," Domus, December 1971.)

34 Abrams, M.H. "Orientation of critical theories", introduction to Abrams, M. H. The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953. reprinted in Lodge, David (ed.) 20th Century Literary Criticism: A Reader. London: Longman, 1972. p17.

35 ibid., p17.

36 Joseph Beuys in Tisdall, Caroline Joseph Beuys, p6.

37 Krauss, Rosalind. Passages in Modern Sculpture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1977. p256.

38 Beuys' proposal was published in the programme to the Festival of New Art-Actions/Agit-Pop/De-Collage/Happening/Events/Antiart/Total Art/Refluxus, at the Technical College, Aachen, Germany on July 20, 1964 (see Adriani, Konnertz & Thomas. Joseph Beuys pp 105-116 )

39 Tisdall, Caroline Joseph Beuys, p92.

40 An account of the Siberian shaman can be found in Eliade, Mircea. Shamanism: Archaic techniques of Ecstasy (originally published in French as Le Chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase, Paris: Librairie Payot, 1951) trans. Willard R. Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.

41 ibid., p33.

42 Beuys is more forthcoming in the Adriani, Konnertz and Thomas monograph, confessing that "things inside me had to be totally transplanted". (see Adriani, Konnertz & Thomas. Joseph Beuys p 56.)

43 see for example Kirby, E. T. "The Shamanistic Origins of Popular Entertainments." The Drama Review. Vol 18 no Spring 1974 pp 5-15.

44 Joseph Beuys. I like America and America Likes Me (also known as Coyote). Performance. Réne Block Gallery, New York, May 1974

45 see Tisdall, Caroline. Beuys: Coyote. Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 1976.

46 Susanne Langer regards the separation between the work of art and the beholder as one of its inherent powers: "normally, the lure of the object is greater than the distractions that compete with it. It is not the percipient who discounts the surroundings, but the work of art which, if it is successful, detaches itself from the rest of the world; he merely sees it as it is presented to him." (Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from Philosophy in a New Key. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953. p45.)

47 Joseph Beuys. Iphigenie/Titus Andronicus. Experimenta 3 Theatre Festival, Frankfurt, May 1969.

48 Tisdall, Caroline. "Beuys: Coyote." Studio International July 1976 pp 36-7.

49 Beuys, Joseph, and Umberto Allemandi. "Joseph Beuys Superstar." Bolaffi Arte June 1974.

50 As Stewart Buettner writes of Pollock's action-paintings, "The content of the painting became a record of the artist's motion." (Buettner, Stewart. American Art Theory: 1945-1970. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981 p87.)

51 Hughes, Robert. "The Noise of Beuys." Time 12 November 1979 p 90.

- 52 In a work such as *Soft Engine, Airflow 6* (1966), Oldenburg recreates the outline of a solid piece of technology in canvas and burlap lacking the requisite rigidity. The unsuitability of the material is emphasised by the suspension of the work in space.
- 53 Joseph Beuys *Fat chair*. 1964 90 x 30 x 30 cm Wooden chair with fat.
- 54 Beuys Theory of Sculpture is presented as a drawing in Tisdall's catalogue (p74: three objects, from left to right, amorphous, heart-shaped and triangular) though it appears more comprehensible explained in relation to *Fat chair*.
- 55 Tisdall, Caroline Joseph Beuys p72
- 56 Joseph Beuys in Tisdall, Caroline Joseph Beuys p44
- 57 Fowler, H.W. & Fowler, F.G. (eds.) The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- 58 Elam, Kier The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama London: Methuen, 1980: pp 29-30.
- 59 Wishing to distance himself from the Minimalists, and in particular the connection between his use of felt and its employment by Robert Morris, Beuys stated, in 1964, "The concept of minimal art means absolutely nothing to me" (Joseph Beuys in Adriani, Konnertz & Thomas Joseph Beuys p125)
- 60 Beuys joined Fluxus in 1962, at its outset, subsequently forming a European "branch", 'Fluxus Zone West'. Benjamin Buchloh suggests that was some disparity between Beuys and the American fluxus artists, who "were simply incapable of making heads or tails of what Beuys was trying to do" see Buchloh, Krauss and Michelson "Joseph Beuys at the Guggenheim." pp 6-7.
- 61 Joseph Beuys *The silence of Marcel Duchamp is overrated*. 11 November 1964 Action (transmitted live on West German television)
- 62 Hughes, Robert "The Noise of Beuys." p90
- 63 Duchamp, Marcel The Blind Man New York: 1917. quoted in Harrison, Charles, and Paul Wood (eds.) Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas Oxford: Blackwell, 1992 p248
- 64 Joseph Beuys in Van Tieghem, Jean-Pierre & Joseph Beuys "Joseph Beuys in Brussels, the 21st of May 1975." in Beuys, Joseph Joseph Beuys Brussels: Galerie Isy Brachot, 1989, p27.
- 65 Joseph Beuys in Schellmann, Jorg, (ed.) Joseph Beuys: Multiples (Catalogue Raisonné of Multiples and Prints 1965-1985) Munich and New York. Edition Schellmann, 1980 unpaginated.
- 66 The concept of logos is explored in Pannenburg, Wolfhart Jesus: God and Man trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe London: SCM Press Ltd, 1968.
- 67 *Lightning with Stag in its Glare* 1958-1985. Environment five copies, bronze, iron, aluminium. The work comprises four large elements (Lightning, Boothia Felix, Goat and Stag) and 35 small "Primordial Animals". For a fuller description see Bastian, Heiner Joseph Beuys: Blitzschlag mit Lichtschien auf Hirsch Lightning with Stag in its Glare Bern: 1986.
- 68 Readings, Bill Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics London and New York: Routledge, 1991, pxxiii.
- 69 Cage, John Silence Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1961. p174.
- 70 Ibid., p95.

- 71 see Oliva, Bonita Achille & Joseph Beuys. "A score by Joseph Beuys."
- 72 Beuys' widow, Eva, refused to allow the exhibition to be termed a retrospective, stating that it was too soon after her husband's death. (see Galloway, David. "Beuys and Warhol: Aftershocks." Art in America July 1988 p116.)
- 73 Lyotard, Jean-François. "Answering the Question." p81.
- 74 *ibid.*, p81.
- 75 Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition pxxiv.
- 76 *ibid.*, p60.
- 77 The work consisted of the planting of 7000 oak trees with an accompanying basalt column in Kassel, Germany, commencing during the exhibition "Documenta 7" in 1982 and completed, after Beuys' death, by his son, Wenzel, at the opening of "Documenta 8".
- 78 Joseph Beuys in Institute of Contemporary Art, London. Art into Society, Society into Art. London: Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 1974

Joseph Beuys and Chris Burden are both considered to be proponents of "Body Art"<sup>1</sup>. They use their physical existence as the means to challenge the limitations of the art work. Beuys refashions the art object within himself so that he has the potential to determine its bounds. The diversity of Beuys' interventions suggest that rather than fixing new limits by which the object might be known, they be considered as *the activity* of determination, or "creativity". Form is disrupted by reconceiving all its various manifestations - physical objects, behaviour, social structures - as extensions of the individual, rather than being self-sufficient; form is performed rather than being realised in an object. Such a disruption is predicated on the stability of the notion of the individual, able to "mould and shape" the world. By its very inclusiveness, Beuys' social sculpture does not distinguish between plastic and performative art works, or between aesthetic and non-aesthetic interventions. Chris Burden's work is also concerned with undermining these distinctions, though he invokes a radical separation between himself and the world, effected by questioning the individual self. Where Beuys presents himself as a performer without any separation between him and his role, Burden undermines the integrity of the individual before the beholder.

Burden seeks to disrupt the limitations and expectations of his role as performer, not by failing to recognise them but creating situations in which they cease to apply. The work then becomes the moment when the artist may determine what limits and expectations may obtain. It is a process that must involve the beholder, but resist being carried out for them, which would serve only to confirm a relationship predicated on gratification through the production of an object. The extremity of much of the work arises not so much from the actions of the artist but in the

withdrawal of certain formal elements that in other situations would vindicate such behaviour. The work seeks to be understood not as a performance, an object produced by the artist to be consumed by the beholder, but as *performative*, as attempting to realise a notion of the self, both on the part of artist and beholder, which is in excess of that prescribed by the terms on which they meet.

### The disappearing, disobedient object

Whilst there is a long tradition of artists presenting themselves as the object of their art, this generally proceeds along discursive or representational lines. The artist uses the mind and body as a 'canvas' on which they impose or *add* character or signification<sup>2</sup>. Much of Chris Burden's questioning of self in the period 1971- 1975 operates by a process of subtraction. When considered in relation to the plastic arts, this subtraction can only proceed so far. Both Robert Rauschenberg's *Erased De Kooning*<sup>3</sup> (1953), in which the work of the Abstract Expressionist is removed by Rauschenberg, and Lucio Fontano's *Spatial Concept* <sup>4</sup>(1960), a canvas "marked" with three knife cuts, might be considered as actions seeking to question the status of a pre-existing object; the two works suppress content in favour of the activity of the artist with respect to the canvas. The ontological limitations and historical associations of the canvas are such, however, that moves to explore predetermined limitations come to be regarded as oppositional and therefore assist in reinforcing the existing parameters: the erased image and the violated field serve to privilege the characteristics of image and field respectively - fundamental elements of representation that the privileging of the activity of the artist would seek to displace. The concern to express that which lies beyond the limitations of the form is achieved by calling attention to what Lyotard terms the "missing

contents", an absence that is assuaged by reinforcing the form's inclusiveness.

Ultimately, the object remains as an irreducible physical presence, which, when consciously stated as such, as in Robert Morris' Primary Structures, disrupts form by inviting the beholder to take note of its contingency upon the same circumstances as herself. The sculpture calls attention to not only its objecthood, but the relationship between itself and the beholder: as Fried declares, the "literalist work *depends on* the beholder, is *incomplete* without him, it *has* been waiting for him."<sup>5</sup> This dependency, which Fried regards as the "condition of theatre", when invested in the object, looks toward the beholder considering her relationship to the object to be foregrounded. The very qualities that Fried ascribes to the literalist object are implicit in the relationship that obtains between performer and beholder. Any means the artist might chose to address the beholder directly, without the mediation of the object, will, unless disrupted in some way, assume the quality of a performance. Lea Vergine suggests that Body Art is a means of reconceiving the relationship between artist and beholder:

The artist's attempt to function in a *different* or *alternative* manner is an expression of the desire to eliminate the habitual position of prestige that his role comports. It is also an attempt to clear the field of interpersonal relations from the forms of alienation that art and culture continually produce and that help to render relationships frustrating and non-emancipatory. <sup>6</sup>

The prestige accruing to the artist arises from the ability to produce something, adhering to certain formal restraints, that the beholder can consume. In the absence of a physical object, the artist or

performer produces behaviour that can be discerned as distinct from that of their own, which then assumes the quality of an object, in that it is a "thing placed before eyes or presented to sense"<sup>7</sup>. The prevalence of this model is such that many have observed the way in which matter to be considered cognitively, requiring the application of moral judgement, is refashioned to appeal to the senses.<sup>8</sup> By rejecting this model, Chris Burden undermines the sense of presence, thereby seeking to "escape identification as the Other and the power relations implied by that identification"<sup>9</sup>. He does not simply attempt to question the terms of the relationship between himself and the beholder, but, as his work develops, effects this through a reconsideration of self, an activity that is directed not to a beholder but which occurs in front of her. The beholder is then left to establish a role for themselves in the changed circumstances, failing to discern a discrete entity that they might 'behold'.

Perhaps the most obvious way to frustrate projection of self is to remove oneself from view, a strategy employed by Burden in his earliest major work, *Five Day Locker Piece*<sup>10</sup>, and in a number of subsequent pieces.

I was locked in Locker Number 5 for five consecutive days and did not leave the locker during this time. The locker measured two feet high, two feet wide and three feet deep. I stopped eating several days prior to entry. The locker directly above me contained five gallons of bottled water; the locker below me contained an empty five gallon bottle<sup>11</sup>.

The work explores the question of presence and absence in very direct terms, as Burden is audible yet unseen. In locating the site of sensorial deprivation, those in attendance formed their relationship to

the piece; some, feeling that they were absolved of identity, transformed the space into a confessional, telling Burden their problems and stories. Others, regarding the artist as disadvantaged, or else objectified by his stasis, felt comfortable discussing the work as if Burden were not present<sup>12</sup>. By lessening the degree to which he projects himself as artist, and consequently the extent to which the beholder is required to attend to this projection, a space is created in which the relationship between artist and beholder can be negotiated. This is aided by Burden's choice of space: the lockers and their environs would have been commonplace to those members of the university who came into contact with the work. Such familiarity works against the authorising tendency of the gallery that is able to accommodate even the non-visibility of the object in a work such as Yves Klein's *Le Vide*<sup>13</sup> ('The Void'), a condition Brian O'Doherty refers to in his essay on the nature of exhibition spaces:

The discrete desk may be the only piece of furniture [in the gallery]. In this context a standing ashtray becomes almost a sacred object, just as a firehose in a modern museum looks not like a firehose but an aesthetic conundrum. Modernism's transportation of perception from life to formal values is complete<sup>14</sup>.

Bereft of the aesthetic 'frame' of the gallery, the beholder requires some other indication of artistic endeavour. On viewing the lockers during the five day period there would have been no visible change in circumstances, the existence of the work having to be verified either by the artist making an audible signal or through consultation with other members of the audience. Location of the experience is a result of investigations by the beholder to the extent that, like the movement within and around the Primary Structures, this searching becomes incorporated within it. The lack of visible information heightens the



experiential nature of the work, as the beholder senses things they had perhaps previously ignored. Rather than accept the visual information presented to them, an act of imagination is required to conceive of the artist within the restricted space of the locker. In an earlier, undocumented work Burden was locked in a bathroom in which he could be seen through a one-way fisheye lens<sup>15</sup>. In both this and *Five Day Locker Piece* the visual element of the artist-beholder relationship is isolated from other factors, wryly commented on in the earlier piece by the distortion of the viewing lens, and denied in *Locker Piece*. A subsequent work, *Shadow*<sup>16</sup>, in which Burden appeared in shadow before an audience, reading descriptions of his work and assuming the attire and manner he supposed might typify an "avant-garde artist", again effects a divide between the presence of the artist and that of the person embodying the role. In his account of the work, Burden states that his intention was "to make my personal presence almost superfluous"<sup>17</sup>.

Although Burden suggests a line of causality between his next work, *Shout Piece*<sup>18</sup>, and the pieces *Prelude to 220 or 110*<sup>19</sup> and *220*<sup>20</sup>, there is a distinct shift between the first of these and *Five Day Locker Piece*. In his notes for *Prelude to 220 or 110* the artist states:

People were angry at me for the *Shout* piece, so in *110* I presented them with an opportunity in a sacrificial situation - to atone for the earlier piece<sup>21</sup>.

inviting one to invest subsequent pieces, particularly *Trans-fixed*<sup>22</sup>, *Through the Night Softly*<sup>23</sup> and *White Light/White Heat*<sup>24</sup> with a notion of the artist as oblation. What is obscured by the emergence of this connection between the works is the distinction between *Five Day Locker Piece* and subsequent pieces that is established very clearly in *Shout Piece*. In *Shout Piece*, Burden, having invited people to the

gallery, subjected them to his amplified voice shouting repeatedly "Get the fuck out *immediately*"<sup>25</sup>. He had installed himself on a fourteen foot high platform, was covered in red body paint and illuminated by stage lighting. Most reacted to the hostile behaviour by promptly leaving the space. The distinct powerlessness of the artist in *Five Day Locker Piece* is avenged by an act in which he controls those elements, that he had denied himself previously; who attended, how they might interact with him and possession of the space. Though the later works do not exhibit such hostility they are likewise informed by an inviolate separation between artist and beholder. *Shout Piece* does not allow of any save the most cursory interaction, inviting the beholder to delineate between the man (at whose request they came to the space) and the artist (who then uses their presence as the foil for his behaviour). While interaction on a discursive or extended participatory level is all but excluded, the terms of the relationship between artist and beholder become paramount. Burden's status as artist and that of his work as art is determined by his freedom to act towards others in this way without intervention. Anyone taking exception to his provocative behaviour in this instance does so at possible risk of violence to themselves.

A similar example of placing the beholder in a position where, at risk to herself, she can 'test' the conviction of the artist and their art occurs in Vito Acconci's *Claim*<sup>26</sup>:

A two-level loft - at street level, next to the stairway door, a TV monitor records my activity and functions as a warning to viewers (a viewer decides whether he wants to open the door and come down).

I'm in the basement blindfolded, seated on a chair at the foot of the stairs - I have at hand two metal pipes and a

crowbar - I am talking aloud, continuously, to myself - talking myself into a possession obsession<sup>27</sup>.

In both these pieces, the artist appears to be placing the beholder in a position where their response is not the product of accumulated sensory data, but a reaction predicated on the interpersonal level, the relationship between herself and the artist. If the threat is dismissed, then the beholder has not engaged with the work but avoided it: conversely, if the beholder meets the threat they cease to observe the piece but participate within its terms. Between these extremes is the exploration of the artist's role *in front of* rather than *for* the beholder, approximating the frontality of the object rather than the dependency of the performer.

Burden and Acconci both "defend" a specific space, knowledge and possession of which, the beholder is given to understand, cannot be gained lightly. But this space is not some autonomous thing; rather, it is *the right to create*, that is otherwise granted *in perpetua* to those who fashion cultural activities, that the individual defends. The beholder is placed in a position where she can perceive that she both extends this right (by attending to the artist) and challenges it (in responding to the provocations the artist makes.) This situation arises because the artist places *himself* at the point of acceptance or rejection rather than an object or role and thus invites a response predicated on the individual's sense of self rather than one pre-determined by exposure to other cultural activities. Though both artists assume the mantle of the object, to be judged by the beholder, the lack of separation between the artist and his role, suggests that rejection or dismissal of one applies equally to the other. Implicit within this suggestion is the notion that the performer is habitually objectified by the beholder, rendering the relationship "frustrating and non-emancipatory", and that moves to alter

the terms of this relationship must evade being considered within the existing frame of the performance. Instead, the performative frame might be construed, in Jean Baudrillard's terms, as "that which allows one to play: a stake":

It is that which must be seduced, as everything else, as God, as the law, the truth, the unconscious, the real. All these things only exist in the brief instant when one challenges them to exist; they exist only by virtue of this challenge to which we call them...If one reflects upon it, we exist only in the brief instant when we are seduced - by whatever moves us: an object, a face, an idea, a word, a passion.<sup>28</sup>

In both *Claim* and *Shout Piece*, the performative frame is transformed from being the container of meaning into "a substance of bidding and challenge", negotiated by artist and beholder as they explore stratagems for relating to each other.

Burden's declared 'atonement' for the aggression of *Shout Piece* in *Prelude to 110 or 220*<sup>29</sup> is indicative of the artist regarding the mutability of his relationship with the beholder as the creative spur in his work. Like *Shout Piece*, *Prelude* sets up the relationship within very rigid parameters.

I was strapped to the floor with copper bands bolted into the concrete. Two buckets of water with 110 lines submerged in them were placed near me. The piece was performed from 8 - 10pm for three nights<sup>30</sup>.

It is tempting to regard this piece as a behavioural experiment, with the parameters for interaction being rigidly defined, lacking only an external observer to record the results. Where *Locker Piece* effected a reversal in the positions of beholder and performer predicated on visibility, here the passivity of the audience is assumed by Burden, whilst the beholder is encouraged to traverse the space. The circumstances of the work reflect the resistance to any such manipulation of roles; Burden's physical restraint is met by the beholder's moral constraints, which conspire to produce an ongoing tension in the piece. This cannot be dissipated within the confines of the work and its release through attaining its breaking point (the buckets being kicked over) has the obvious consequence of harming Burden. Whilst the artist is, superficially, in a more restricted situation, the elimination of choice of action or evasion of danger, together with the fact that he himself instigated the circumstances of his confinement, frees him from much of the apprehension he observed in the audience:

...they would sort of come up gingerly, but they all stayed really very far away as if the floor were littered with banana peels and they might at any point slip and kick the buckets over<sup>31</sup>.

The degree of risk for the artist is heightened because there is nothing in the performance superfluous to its communication. It is distinct from the risks undertaken by circus performers and stunt men and women, for example, in that Burden's role is a passive one. The piece lacks the narrative flow of a performer attempting something hazardous, where the feat itself is predicated on the prior conveyance to the audience of the enormity of risk entailed and followed by praise for what has been achieved. Without the attendant ceremony and the sense of a narrative unfolding before them, those in the space with Burden

have nothing to assure them that they are present only in the capacity of viewers.

The performative element of the work is so atrophied by Burden's immobility that the beholder is invited to consider that her requirement to witness something has provoked the situation in which a man's life is endangered: the beholder is no longer simply someone for whom an object is produced, but is asked to take responsibility for the consequences of demanding that an object be placed before her. Engagement with the work requires that the beholder be governed by its circumstances, accepting her complicity in the endangering of the artist's life. Risk is a direct consequence of the presence of the beholder rather than being provided for her entertainment. The reticence of the beholder arises in part from a fear of relinquishing her predetermined role; to break out of the frame with a benevolent gesture (moving the buckets away) or a malevolent one (kicking them over) would entail altering her status and, consequently, that of the work. Instead, the reserve that Burden recognises in his audience suggests that though they persisted in relating to his predicament as an audience, the playing out of this role was very evidently foregrounded.

### The ties that bind

*Bed Piece*, *Shout Piece*, *White Light/White Heat* and other pieces where duration is a significant element in the work can be seen as confronting the visual with the experiential, setting up situations in which regarding the work itself is coupled with a consciousness of oneself before it. What distinguishes them from each other is not only the differing actions the artist undertook, but also the manner in which they were presented. *Bed Piece*, like other works Burden instigated during

this period, involves submitting the mind and body to conditions that threaten the individual's health:

Josh Young asked me to do a piece for the Market Street Program from February 18 - March 10. I told him I would need a single bed in the gallery. At noon on February 18, I took off all my clothes and got into bed. I had given no other instructions and did not speak to anyone during the piece<sup>32</sup>.

It is not unusual for there to be a conflict between the will of an individual and maintenance of equilibrium in the mind and body - sports of endurance and physical aggression, for example, demand the suppression of exhaustion and pain - though it is usually accompanied by an external and explicit justification. That such a conflict exists is not as immediately apparent in this work as in the shorter and more dramatic *Velvet Water*<sup>33</sup>, discussed below. The work is less "staged" than the precipitous *Prelude*, though the risk of injury to Burden is apparent as the piece develops. Where the earlier work had connotations of sacrificial undertakings, *Bed Piece* evokes an ascetic doctrine. From an enforced passivity in the face of very particular circumstances, in *Bed Piece* the artist moves closer to a position of non-intervention.

The most exacting requirement of *Bed Piece*, its duration, is a circumstance that Burden inherits rather than instigates. Similarly, Burden does not manipulate the frame that bounds what might be termed (given the conjunction of volition and stasis) his "(in) activity", as was the case with *Prelude* and *Shout Piece*, but, instead, submits himself to its requirements. Removed from all but the initiating volition, the artist appears to have assigned responsibility for his well-being to the gallery staff, expecting them to accommodate him in much the same way that

they might take custody of a painting for an exhibition. For the gallery owner and those who visited Burden during the piece, deprived of any instructions as to how to respond to the artist's absolution of responsibility, the need to maintain the perceived integrity of the work conflicted with the fundamental requirements for the continuance of life. This integrity, the sense that to disturb Burden, to remove him from his confinement, would be tantamount to depriving him of his right to express himself, is not explicitly stated by the artist, but rather is projected onto the piece as a result of the associations of work presented within the confines of the gallery space. Burden is not offering himself as an object, nor could he with any hope of success, given that such an offering embraces an act of the ego. Instead, it is the received idea of the passivity of the object before the subject in the gallery space that invites those in attendance to regard him as such.

Unlike *Prelude*, in which Burden was in no position to extricate himself from the circumstances of the performance, beholder and artist in *Bed Piece* are both engaged in maintaining the constancy of the art work, even as it threatens to harm the mental and physical integrity of the artist. Burden plays down the element of foreboding during the execution of the work, declaring:

The hardest time is when I am deciding to do a piece or not, because once I make a decision to do it, then I have decided - that's the real turning point. It's a commitment. That's the crux of it right then<sup>34</sup>.

yet the psychological pressures of remaining dormant for such a period of time, even allowing for the fact that he was fed "when Josh felt like it, or remembered"<sup>35</sup>, belie the image of a man resting. More relevant than the actual circumstances of the performance is the unconditional manner



in which Burden placed himself in the hands of others. Following a similar pattern of non-disclosure, *Doomed* (1975)<sup>36</sup> consisted of Burden setting a clock to noon and then lying motionless under a pane of glass inclined at forty-five degrees against a gallery wall. He had intended to terminate the work (by smashing the clock) at the point when the museum officials intervened in the piece, though he could not predict that it would be over forty-five hours before such an occasion arose.

The duration of *Bed Piece* created a growing sense of tension in those observing it, particularly a couple known to the artist who considered "pulling him out of it"<sup>37</sup>. Their reasons for not doing so are unknown, but obviously, for them and others that expressed concern for Burden's well-being as the work proceeded, the piece approached the point at which intervention would have become a moral imperative. Conversely, to the casual observer, *Bed Piece* may invite derision, offering little to see and requiring no discernible effort on the part of the artist: at the start of *Doomed*, members of the audience, antagonised by Burden's immobility, began to throw things at him. *Bed Piece* requires that the beholder consider the ramifications of the artist's decision. Through placing the museum officials (in *Doomed*) and friends (in *Bed Piece*) in situations of what might be regarded as unreasonable responsibility, Burden called attention to the implicit terms of these relationships.

As the duration of the beholder's exposure to the work increases, so too does the similarity between their own and Burden's position; both are engaged in a very particular, passive state, encompassed and sanctioned by the aesthetic frame.<sup>38</sup> This sets up a situation similar to that found in *Five Day Locker Piece*, in which the visual impact of the piece is minimal and constant, whilst the beholder's mental construction of the event is immediate and expanding. *Bed Piece* is perhaps equally, if not more unsatisfactory, in visual terms as *Locker Piece*, because

though it does present the beholder with an object, the allure of the somnolent artist is possibly even less than the intrigue occasioned by his absence. Both works appeal to the cognitive rather than the visual, inviting the beholder to place themselves in the position of the artist, whether the physical confines of the locker or the psychological deprivation of ongoing immobility. Where confinement in the locker was obviously uncomfortable and required the intercession of an outside party to extricate the artist, *Bed Piece* conveys an image of relaxation and comfort, with the artist able to terminate the work at any moment. The marginalising of the visual element in *Bed Piece* allows for those things which cannot be brought to visibility to imprint themselves cognitively. This strategy is characterised by the artist and beholder moving toward each other through a shared experience; not simply the performance itself, but knowing that one is experiencing the performance. The work then becomes not simply that which is performed, but also the circumstances of its performance, the distinction marking it out as an *event* in Lyotard's use of the term, evading containment within a system of discourse.

The fixed duration of *Bed Piece* provided a known point of termination, but three weeks of stasis, deprived of communication with others, lulled Burden into an unbalanced view of the world:

I started to *like* it there. It was *really* seductive. That's why I considered just staying there - because it was so much nicer than the outside world. I *really* started to like it, and then that's when I started thinking that I'd better be pretty sure that when the end of the exhibition came - I got up<sup>30</sup>.

By making the object his body, as opposed to a role he assumes or item he creates, Burden problematises a point of conjecture that

usually exists between the piece and the beholder concerning the intention of the artist. It is not removed entirely, as the diversity of opinions as to Burden's meaning testify, but, in the moment of performance, Burden's intention is clearly that which engages with the resistances of the mind and body. Burden alludes to this transparency of purpose in an overview of his early work:

To be right the pieces have to have a kind of crisp quality to them...When I think of them I try to make them sort of clean, so that they are not formless, with a lot of separate parts. They are pretty crisp and you can read them pretty quickly, even the ones that take place over a long period of time<sup>40</sup>.

If Burden's action is ostensibly directed against himself, then that which justifies or seeks to explain the presence of the beholder must be in excess of, or at least distinct from, the discernible performance, namely, the terms by which it operates. It has already been suggested that Burden's exploration of self results in a corresponding questioning of identity by the beholder. The performative circumstances in which this enquiry takes place offer an existing model predicated on opposition. The differences between the two are necessary to initiate the exchange - an "other" is required in order to instigate a relation. The degree of difference and those factors which maintain it are threatened by the piece itself. Lea Vergine's essay on Body Art elaborates what this relationship might be, concluding that each party is looking for an "'other" who is willing to give him reassurance in the phantasy or utopianising world that he is attempting to make visible"<sup>41</sup>. The aim of Burden's work is not to eliminate the aesthetic frame - its complicity in its mechanics is too great to set itself apart - but more likely to *disrupt* it, by incorporating it into the workings of an overtly masochistic frame.

This is not to suggest that Burden's explorations are masochistic, but rather that they display the characteristics Rachel Rosenthal attributes to this type of behaviour: "the eradication of the ego, the performance aspect, and ritual"<sup>42</sup>. The tension between the first two characteristics is evident in *Bed Piece*, where the move toward the status of the physical object, the insentient thing, through immobility, contends with the volition of a performed act. This might invite one to regard the resistance between objecthood and the performative as an implosion, given that the claim to primacy of both states increases as the work proceeds. In the circumstances, the apotheosis of both is reached at the point of death, or more accurately, given the insentient nature of objects, non-existence, in which both are absent. Burden's stasis is the representation of this negative state, the will to remain where he is fusing with the inertia of the object. By the third week of the piece, the apparent paucity of the work invites the beholder to discern the attempt to make visible that which is not. The space that exists between the visible and that which cannot come into visibility coincides exactly with that between his stasis and the (potential) act of leaving the bed (whether of his own accord or through death), and thus with leaving the aesthetic frame. The performative is present throughout, though the site of its occurrence shifts from the observable (staying in the bed) to the potential (leaving the bed). Remaining where he is, Burden increasingly does not convey the act of immobility but instead the possibility of an act that cannot be contained within the frame.

As with *Prelude*, duration qualifies the interpretation of *Bed Piece*, though whereas with the earlier piece what is implicit in the work as a tableau - restraint and danger - becomes an explicit threat as the work unfolds, in *Bed Piece*, the passage of time invites an interpretation of the piece as the antithesis of its initial image - relaxation becomes agitation. Such a schema posits an irreconcilable difference between the

visual, representational image that is instantaneous and the experiential, presentational action that has duration. Stated in this way, time, more than any other particular characteristic of the work, might be said to be of paramount importance. The temporal is a prerequisite of many of the Burden's interventions and points of comparison exist between them and the work of others who invite the beholder to place process - "a state of being in progress or being carried on" (Concise Oxford Dictionary) - at the heart of their undertakings. Where the sight alone of Robert Morris's *Slab*<sup>43</sup> does not lend itself to exegesis, inviting the beholder to regard herself, through her movement and changing attention over time, as contributing to the delineation of form, the presence of the artist in *Bed Piece* provides a readily discernible image *and* an interdependent action. The photograph of *Bed Piece*, showing Burden recumbent, provides an indication of this difference. While recording an event of endurance and privation, the image it proffers epitomises comfort and security - a distortion and conflation of Burden's experience that Susan Sontag argues is characteristic of the photographic medium:

By furnishing this already crowded world with a duplicate one of images, photography makes us feel that the world is more available than it really is.

...It would not be wrong to speak of people having a *compulsion* to photograph: to turn experience itself into a way of seeing. Ultimately, having an experience becomes identical with taking a photograph of it, and participating in a public event comes more and more to be equivalent to looking at it in photographed form<sup>44</sup>.

Such is the lure of the instantaneous image transformed into tangible object that one is invited to believe it exceeds its temporal fixity, conveying not a representation of an instant, but indicative of an

event. Its status as 'action' exceeds its content. In discussing a photograph of a stunned group of spectators, Sontag intimates this subjugation of content: "What do these people see? We don't know. And it doesn't matter. It is an event: something worth seeing - and therefore worth photographing"<sup>45</sup>. Sontag's use of the term "event" is comparable to that of Jean-François Lyotard. He suggests that the occurrence cannot be reduced to a representation (Sontag's photograph) while Sontag argues that the pervasiveness of camera culture has altered experience to the extent that any occurrence is a nascent photograph - "everything exists to end in a photograph"<sup>46</sup>. The point of common ground between the two is the disruption of the representational by the temporal. Lyotard places the occurrence in a continuous present - "something happens" - that is not available to the representation that concerns itself with the past - "what *has* happened". Sontag, observing that "the particular qualities and intentions of photographs tend to be swallowed up in the generalised pathos of time past" <sup>47</sup> sets up an eternal past that was never present in which the representation exists, divorced from the occurrence that was once present.

In *Bed Piece*, the potential act moves toward visibility with the assistance of Burden's inertia. The artist's frenzied activity in *Velvet Water* gives visibility to the conflict between the will of the artist and the resistances of the body:

Separated from the audience by a row of lockers, I sat next to a small sink filled with water. The audience sat facing a 19" monitor framed by four 9" monitors, two on each side. The large monitor showed an extreme close-up of my face and followed the movements of my head during the performance. The small monitors showed a fixed view of my head, shoulders, and the sink.

I started the performance looking directly into the cameras and saying "Today I am going to breathe water which is the opposite of drowning, because when you breathe water you believe water to be a richer, thicker oxygen capable of sustaining life".

I repeatedly submerged my face in the sink and attempted to breathe water. After about five minutes I collapsed choking.

The cameras were turned off<sup>48</sup>.

Burden was kept alive by the involuntary choking and gagging that expelled water as he tried to inhale it. The immediacy of the work is far greater than that of *Bed Piece*, though it is qualified by the distancing effect of seeing the performance on a monitor even as it is heard directly. The division between the unmediated sound and the relayed image is analogous to that between the will of the artist and the resistance of the body. This is instigated by Burden conveying his intention audibly (as opposed to using a visual means such as a programme or explanatory title). The placement of the monitors is such that they impose a barrier between performer and beholder which separates the occurrence from its re-presentation on the screen. As the body restricts his actions, so the extreme close-up of the artist seen on the monitors conspires to reduce the experiential to the visual. Instead of the beholder being able to construct the event by selective focus of attention, the screen dictates to her what the event is. Where the temporal and spatial limits of the directly witnessed performance are flexible, dependent on how one attends to them, here they are governed by the on/off logic of the screen and the limits of its viewing area. Though the image of Burden is more immediate because of the closeness of the camera and the cropping of extraneous elements, the beholder can no longer entertain the possibility of interposing or having

any effect on the action. Where, in *Prelude*, Burden sets up a situation in which the role of beholder is transformed from the passivity of "disinterested interest" to complicity in the event, here the beholder's non-involvement is revealed as powerlessness in the face of provocation. The noise of the artist choking on water presents the beholder with a cry for help to which she is unable to respond. The close-up image on the screen acts as verification of the event (and some degree of reassurance that what is being undertaken is not accomplished by sleight of hand) but this recognition of the event's existence is all that is available to the beholder. The sounds of Burden breathing water belong to an event occupying the same time and space as that of the beholder, yet in being interpreted through the images on the monitors, the event is transposed from the unmediated here and now to a domain where it is controlled and constant, no longer in possession of an absolute position in time and space, but one of a potentially infinite number of occurrences. In this context, Burden's involuntary utterances suggest an inveighing against what Jean Baudrillard describes as "the obscenity of what no longer has any secret, of what dissolves completely in information and communication."<sup>49</sup> While the visual element of the event is amplified through the medium of television, the cameras could be regarded as altering Burden's perspective of the performance. Without the relative freedom to attract or repel attention, to break down the rigidity of the on/off state of the medium, and without a specific audience but instead one that simply sees continuously, without judgement or concern, Burden's performance seems less a matter of choice than inevitability, such that one can compare him to the example of the schizophrenic given at the conclusion of Baudrillard's essay *The Ecstasy of Communication*:

It is the end of interiority and intimacy, the overexposure  
and transrance of the world which traverses him without



obstacle. He can no longer produce the limits of his own being, can no longer play nor stage himself, can no longer produce himself as a mirror<sup>50</sup>.

Where *Bed Piece* began from very little and generated a powerful air of expectancy, *Velvet Water* seems driven by a pre-existing tension. Burden delivers a spoken introduction that then develops into the action proper, instigating a narrative structure that cannot reach a point of closure. Just as *Bed Piece* looks toward a potential act that cannot be realised, so *Velvet Water* undertakes to achieve something that is known (through the instances of death by drowning) to be impossible. By relaying the event through television monitors, the artist invites the beholder to embrace a medium that is not subject to the same strictures as direct experience. The roving eye of the camera can bring things to visibility that the human eye could not witness unaided; in this sense the camera can real-ise precisely those things denied to the unaided eye. The distinction between the visual and experiential in such circumstances is not always wholly apparent, given Sontag's contention that "participating in a public event comes more and more to be equivalent to looking at it in photographed form"<sup>51</sup>. Within this context, Burden's failure does not coincide with the point at which the medium can no longer contain the work, nor would the aesthetic frame have been broken had the artist died in the attempt, because its only requirement is the image. This indifference to suffering is not a choice available to the beholder, but is an inherent characteristic of the medium. By presenting his action via a monitor and allowing the audience to hear him suffocating directly, Burden manipulates the reception of the work so that the audience are distanced sufficiently to attend to the work whilst at the same time experiencing an empathetic reaction to the artist's struggle: the image on the monitors heightens the sense of Burden's predicament whilst literally inhibiting the beholder from intervening.

## Representation as the site of doubt

---

*Velvet Water* is performed in immediate proximity to its representation and is thus able to undermine the authority of the image by providing another means of regarding the work. While, in the works before an audience, an unspoken belief that the frame might ultimately sanction and permit Burden to cause injury to himself could be regarded as lessening the actuality of the piece, this conceptual and highly ineffectual safety net is frequently absent in the documented works. In *Deadman* (see plate 30), for example, the safe conclusion of a work in which Burden lies down on a main road under a canvas tarpaulin illuminated by two fifteen-minute flares was a consequence of the arrival of the police before the flares went out.<sup>52</sup> The beholder may not have asked the artist to put himself at risk but such circumstances



Plate 30. Chris Burden. *Deadman* (Photograph, 1972)

expose the presence of a set of rules and expectations that curtail expression of anything deemed to fall outside of their parameters.

Many of Burden's pieces are presented only through photographs or film, usually accompanied by an explanatory text. Burden's contribution to the documentation of his work is always in the past tense, indicating that, for himself at least, the occurrence is concluded; what remains comprises its representation. In contrast, Vito Acconci's pieces are outlined in the present tense, in the manner of a commentary accompanying a film. His account of *Claim*, quoted previously, is characteristic of the way in which he attempts to narrow the distinction between the viewer who attended the performance and those who subsequently watch the work on video. In those cases where no audience was present, it is apparent that Burden considers his contribution to the work completed; the beholder is left to approach the work through the documentation that remains.

The works discussed above all share at least a partial acknowledgement of the presence of the artist by the audience and he of them, though Burden always occupies an inviolate space that the audience are unable or unwilling to enter. Burden's performances that are intended to be seen only in documented form continue the uneasy dialogue with the beholder outside of the circumstances of the occurrence. *Shoot* is as notorious as it is short. "At 7:45pm. I was shot in the left arm by a friend. The bullet was a copper jacket 22 long rifle. My friend was standing about fifteen feet from me"<sup>53</sup>. With *Shoot*, neither party comes into contact with the other except through the manifestations of the work. Properly these comprise photographs and Burden's accompanying statement, though in addition, a performance entitled *Show the Hole*<sup>54</sup>, given in Florence, Italy, in 1980, made direct reference to the earlier work:

...One at a time I received each person from the audience waiting outside. As each person entered, I addressed them in Italian and asked them in a cordial manner to "Please sit down, " then looking at them I said "In 1971 I did a performance in which I was shot in the arm." Finally I would roll up my sleeve and as I pointed with my finger at the scar in my arm, I would say "The bullet went in here and came out there"<sup>55</sup>.

Whether the beholder comes into contact with one or all of these references to the work is beyond the artist's control. Most people knew of the work not through gallery documentation or the artist's published catalogue of performances<sup>56</sup> but through the media, which seized on the extremity of the act, turning it into a *cause célèbre*: "By 1973, [Burden's] work had been written up in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Time*, *Avalanche*, *Esquire* and *Newsweek*"<sup>57</sup>. That Burden was shot in the arm would attract little attention in a country where every citizen has the right to bear arms, were it not for the fact that it disrupts the notions of assailant, victim and motive by which one comprehends acts of violence. To those who use violence against themselves one can attach the motive of suicide or mental disorder, for example, thereby introducing an external element, such as the hostility of the circumstances the victim finds herself in, or hereditary factors, that can function as the (indirect) assailant without compromising the detachment of the observer. *Shoot* confounds placement within this scheme, its documentation serving only to confirm its occurrence rather than explain what is occurring. The extremity and efficacy of the act discourage its easy dismissal; like the irreducible bulk of Robert Morris' sculptures that cannot be ignored even if the reason for their existence is unknown, there is a surfeit of actuality that cannot account for itself. In *The Postmodern Condition*, Lyotard writes of the self-legitimizing aspect of narrative;

Narratives...determine criteria of competence and/or illustrate how they are to be applied. They thus define what has the right to be said and done in the culture in question, and since they are themselves part of that culture, they are legitimated by the simple fact that they do what they do<sup>58</sup>.

The particular narrative structure outlined above involving victim, assailant and motive finds a basis in the narrative "posts" (sender, addressee, hero) that Lyotard suggests:

are so organised that the right to occupy the post of sender receives the following double grounding: it is based upon the fact of having occupied the post of addressee, and of having been recounted oneself, by virtue of the name one bears, by a previous narrative - in other words, having been positioned as the diagetic reference of other narrative events<sup>59</sup>.

The process of narration that Lyotard describes as "narrative" is itself an act; the "posts" can become the substance of a future narrative. This sets up a continual deferral of the act itself as it is re-presented within the terms of another act, which in turn is not visible until it too can emerge as a result of a subsequent act. With *Shoot*, Burden invites the beholder to occupy a position within the act that is being narrated and as a constituent of the act of narration. If Burden is shot in the arm that the act may be recorded and reproduced within the context of the gallery then the "assailant" could be said to be that person who requires to see something in those circumstances, who is also the "addressee" of the documentation. The process of construction invited by the documentation of *Shoot* requires that the beholder accept that the prior event is contingent on the present narration of which they are part.

Where the structure of the grand narrative arises from "the diagetic reference of other narrative events", that which would accommodate *Shoot* relates only to itself. There is no fundamental or teleological temporality to which it adheres except that which is constructed within it, and is occupied by the process of its constructing.

The simplicity of *Shoot* and its lack of discernible motive is such that the occurrence is not easily submerged under a narrative. *Trans-fixed*, with its overt allusion to crucifixion, would appear to be Burden's most accessible work involving his body.

Inside a small garage on Speedway Avenue, I stood on the rear bumper of a Volkswagen. I lay on my back over the rear section of the car, stretching my arms onto the roof. Nails were driven through my palms onto the roof of the car. The garage door was opened and the car was pushed half way out into the speedway. Screaming for me the engine was run at full speed for two minutes. After two minutes, the engine was turned off and the car pushed back into the garage. The door was closed<sup>60</sup>.

Because the piece has such strong allusions to the death of Christ - the photograph of the hands, for example, has parallels with Thomas asking for proof - and because an ironic stance toward this subject is also evident in the car's associations with salvation through technology, there is no lack of material from which to extract a reading of the work. The nature of the documentation is such, however, that the beholder is continually referred outside of the narrative that would seek to encompass the event.



Plate 31. Chris Burden. *Trans-fixed* (Performance/documentation, April 23, 1974, Venice, California)

There are two photographs that accompany the description of the piece ; one showing the artist nailed to the back of the Volkswagen (see plate 31), the other a close-up of his hands, indicating where the nails passed through him. The latter photograph clearly is intended to answer the question of authenticity begged by the former, but fails to do so because both operate in the same, unreliable medium. The existence of the two photographs qualifies the notion of the work given in the text.

Burden's description conveys a linear progression of events, culminating in the two minutes outside the garage during which the artist is impaled on the revving vehicle. The first photograph visualises this moment, the second seemingly stands outside the occurrence itself, but in attempting to validate the former disrupts it. The injured hands cannot be regarded as a consequence of the action but an element within it. The action is not complete in the sense that the presentation of the hands suggests that the event is not autonomous but needs to call on an external agency for verification. Also, the photograph of the hands looks toward the indeterminate temporal extension of the work, providing no indication of when it was taken relative to the initial puncturing of the skin. In effect, *Trans-fixed* is given to the beholder as the amalgam of the occurrence and its consequences. There is a conflict between that which is closed and lends itself to representation - the act as described in the text, with its accompanying allusions - and the photograph of the hands which is presentational and open. The difference between these two states is inherent in the act, but is foregrounded by the documentation which seeks to hold both present.

Whilst the immediacy of *Velvet Water* may encourage the beholder to regard the act and its representation as oppositions that conflate within known spatial and temporal co-ordinates to produce the work, *Shoot* and *Trans-fixed*, because of the requirement that the beholder construct the work, allow greater freedom in determining how the disparate states co-exist. To regard this disparity as subsequent to the event, and thus instilling it with an overriding historicity, is to place it within the bounds of representation, a system of language reliant upon the primacy and stability of the "present". Rather than posit a moment (the occurrence) from which all related circumstances are posterior and dependent, one might entertain a notion of representation that would evade "the creation of time through the mechanism of representing each



present moment in another"<sup>61</sup>. While representation necessarily is related to that which it purports to re-present, the nature of this relation might derive from the work itself rather than being bound up in the confirmation of an *a priori* system of discourse. Dorothea Olkowski-Laetz suggests the possibility of this position in the following questions:

Is there any other way for thought to get its orientation when the work of art is detached from any owner-user or origin? Is there any point of departure that allows the work of art to be its own orientation and to provide an orientation for thought not bound to presence or absence, to substance and its accidents?<sup>62</sup>

If the work of art is to be its own orientation then it must initiate moves that evade its co-option within the system of discourse, or, within the terms of Lyotard's *discours*, "the process of representation by concepts"<sup>63</sup>, must render it opaque, so that that which cannot be incorporated in its logic of opposition, Lyotard's *figure* - "the point at which the oppositions by which discourse works are opened to a radical heterogeneity or singularity"<sup>64</sup> - becomes evident. The questions relevant to *Trans-fixed* then become the following; how might a work that is fundamentally concerned with the human condition be said to be detached from an owner-user?; how might this detached work orientate itself without recourse to the oppositional structure; and what might such a work reveal? Olkowski-Laetz cites Heidegger's belief that:

the more cleanly ties to the human are cut, the more detached the work is from origins, the more dehumanised the work, the more it leads us into the "open", where a totally unique being can be brought forth.<sup>65</sup>

Where the preceding sections of this essay have concerned themselves with the manner or form in which Burden presents his work, the means by which the artist effects such a separation between himself and the condition he shares with the beholder requires an examination of what might tentatively be regarded as content, the pain of the artist. When an artist produces a work that the beholder might associate with pain, such as Picasso's *Guernica*, or Francis Bacon's tortured figures, whilst they allude to that which is unrepresentable, the method of showing requires that they engage in a system of signification that the experience cannot enter. This opposition is what Lyotard regards as a modern aesthetics of the sublime, allowing the audience to indulge in "the solace of good forms" whilst permitting them to "share collectively the nostalgia for the unattainable", to be distinguished from the postmodern which "puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself"<sup>66</sup>

Through experiencing pain in front of the beholder, rather than using accepted means of conveying it, Burden prevents the appearance of "good forms"; *Velvet Water* is not discursive but incoherent. Similarly, *Through the Night Softly*, recorded on film in its entirety, and shown over the course of a month on television in a ten-second segment of advertising space the artist bought, has strong visual appeal, but is shown outside of any context that might explain it:

Holding my hands behind my back, I crawled through fifty feet of broken glass. There were very few spectators, most of them passersby. This piece was documented with a 16mm film.<sup>67</sup>

There are obvious reservations in assigning the term 'content' to the pain endured by Burden in the course of his work, not least of which is its discernibility to the beholder. In the introduction to *The Body in Pain*, Elaine Scarry sets out a diametrical opposition:

...for the person in pain, so incontestably and unegotiably present is it that "having pain" may come to be thought of as the most vibrant example of what it is to "have certainty," while for the other person it is so elusive that "hearing about pain" may exist as the primary model of what it is "to have doubt".<sup>68</sup>

Pain, Scarry argues, in contrast to other states of consciousness,

has no referential content. It is not *of* or *for* anything. It is precisely because it takes no object that it, more than any other phenomenon, resists objectification in language.<sup>69</sup>

In the discussion of *Velvet Water* it was noted that Burden was reduced to pre-verbal utterances in response to the agony of the event. Similarly, Acconci's description of *Hand and Mouth* in *Adaption Studies*<sup>70</sup>:

Pushing my hand into my mouth until I choke and am forced to release my hand; continuing the action for the duration of the film.<sup>71</sup>

only approaches coherency and validity when rendered in a graphic manner. Even then, as the intensity of the pain increases, the ability to maintain an indication of the experience falters, as Burden collapses and Acconci's line of stress ceases to represent. Pain can only become part of discourse through the image of the weapon or the wound. Burden's *Show the Hole* and Joseph Beuys' *Show your wound*<sup>72</sup> both look toward objectifying that which resists representation. The very insistence upon the *projection* of pain evident in the first word of both titles suggests that it will be known by forthright declaration rather than merely be accepted. What Scarry refers to as the "aversiveness" of pain, however, suggests that pain creates an internal division in the person experiencing it, that

overrides any sense of a unified self presenting something that could convey the experience to an external observer:

Pain is a pure physical experience of negation, an immediate sensory rendering of "against," of something being against one, and of something one must be against. Even though it occurs within oneself, it is at once identified as "not oneself," "not me".<sup>73</sup>

Concomitant with the "certainty" of self in pain is the identification of "the other" ("not me") with the experience of pain. Such a condition is enclosed, beginning and ending with the artist and thus further contributing to the sense of difference between artist and beholder engendered by pain. Where the strategy of reflexivity has its basis in Process Art and Minimalism, the self-absorption that posits the self against its own resistances finds correlation in works such as Carolee Schneemann's *Lateral Splay*,<sup>74</sup> a piece first performed at Judson Dance Theatre, New York in 1963. The twelve participants engaged in four basic types of run across the performing space, informed by guidelines that determined the extreme energy of the piece:

SPEED - fast as possible. DURATION - long as possible;  
any action taken to exhaustion. DIRECTION - random.  
VARIATIONS - climbing, swinging. PERFORMANCE -  
stylised, severe, maximum energy in runs, collision  
embraces are natural, abandoned.<sup>75</sup>

A more comprehensive set of rules relating to encounters with objects, walls or other performers pushes the piece to a level of complexity where the performer's consciousness of performing becomes inhibited. Though the piece may be said to move toward exhaustion, it

cannot be equated with the degree of pain endured in Burden's more extreme works. The connection however, introduces a further, significant point made by Scarry, arising from the etymological relationship between "work" and "pain":

The more [work] realises and transforms itself in its object, the closer it is to the imagination, to art, to culture; the more it is unable to bring forth an object, or, bringing it forth, is then cut off from its object, the more it approaches the condition of pain.<sup>76</sup>

Placed within the terms of Burden's interventions, this relationship between work and pain may be viewed as providing possible answers to the questions posed above. Firstly, the detachment necessary to evade co-option into the system of representation could be seen to arise from the hermetically sealed experience of pain. In *Velvet Water*, neither of the two means by which the occurrence might be known - the relayed image or the unmediated sound - succeed in representing pain; the image is intelligible because it approaches the condition of object in its distance from the event, whilst the sound, as it moves toward conveying the experience splutters into incoherence. In *Shoot*, the documentation evokes a past event, but, caught up as it is in the need for verification, it is "in excess of what is presented to us in the frame"; it is not *the* event. The photograph of the wound is at two removes (it is neither the pain nor its visual sign, the wound, but its representation) and of a different order of sensation, being viewed rather than experienced. The works can be said to concern themselves with the human condition, yet remain detached from an owner-user because there is no object which can arise from the central experience.

In considering the pain of the artist as a constituent of the work, a conflict emerges with the received idea of the artist as exemplary sufferer.<sup>77</sup> Just as Burden's work might be seen as disrupting the diagetic nature of discourse, so might it also be regarded as confounding the position of the artist within the system. Vergine's observation on the emancipatory effect of functioning in a *different* or *alternative* manner would apply to Burden's refusal to accept the suffering position as a prerequisite of his work in favour of exploring the relations that might evolve from initiating such a position from within the work itself. Burden's exploration of self, in its evasion of co-option within the system of discourse, provides the opportunity whereby both of these strategies may be employed concurrently. Rather than reconceiving the object within himself, Burden denies both object and the role of artist, not through a declaration of intent, which would invite consideration as a discrete performance, but instigating divisions that frustrate the projection of a unified identity. This proceeds at the site of projection through a number of stratagems, including positing lack of visibility with physical presence (*Locker Piece*) or through coexistence of representation with the unmediated (*Velvet Water*.) The actions of the artist and presentation of the same are not synonymous. Choosing not to produce a physical object for the beholder, Burden resists the assumption that such an object will be discernible in his actions. His position as artist is "a stake", that which permits him to offer the beholder a challenge rather than satiate her desire for the object. Artist and beholder are separated, not by the formal distinctions arising from their function relative to the object, but forcibly, as a result of the failure of the object to materialise. The actual physical pain of the artist in some works is accompanied by a corresponding agitation - common to all his interventions - arising from the inability of work to realise itself in an object. It looks toward a renegotiation of the relationship between Burden and those attending to him such that this agitation, rather than

being consumed as an embodiment of the suffering artist, is allowed to persist as the mark of difference between them. Granting this respite, the beholder, freed from "the naked truth, the one that haunts all discourses of interpretation"<sup>78</sup>, is able to evolve a dialogue with the "other" whose difference to one's self is acknowledged but not known nor reasserted as the prime function of such a dialogue, which, instead, it exists to discover.

- 1 see Licht, Ira. (ed.) Bodyworks. Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1975. unpaginated.
- 2 ibid
- 3 Robert Rauschenberg. *Erased De Kooning*. 1953.
- 4 Lucio Fontana. *Spatial Concept*. 1960. Oil on canvas. 38 1/4" x 23 1/2in.
- 5 Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." Artforum. Vol 5 no.10. June 1967. pp 12-23. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968. p140.
- 6 Vergine, Lea. Il corpo come linguaggio. La "Body-art" e storie simili. Milan: Giampaola Prearo Editore, 1974. p37.
- 7 Concise Oxford Dictionary
- 8 The abrogation of moral weight in favour of an appeal to the performative is taken up by, amongst others, Richard Schechner and Philip Auslander. (see Schechner, Richard. "Chapter 7: News, Sex, and Performance Theory." in Schechner, R. Between Theatre and Anthropology. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985. pp 295-324 and Auslander, Philip. "Toward a concept of the political in postmodern theatre." Theatre Journal. Vol 39 no 1. 1987 pp 20-34.)
- 9 Auslander, p26.
- 10 Chris Burden. *Five Day Locker Piece*. Performance. April 26-30, 1971. University of California at Irvine.
- 11 Bear, Liza, and Willoughby Sharp. "Chris Burden: The Church of Human Energy." Avalanche. no.8. Summer/Fall 1974. pp 54-55.
- 12 Burden, Chris, and Jan Butterfield. "Through the Night Softly." Arts Magazine. Vol 49. December-January 1975. pp 68-9.
- 13 Yves Klein. *La Vide*. Galerie Iris Clert, Paris. April 1958.
- 14 see Brian O'Doherty's multipart essay on the gallery space (O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space Part 1." Artforum. March 1976. pp 24-30. and "Inside the White Cube: Part II: The eye and the spectator." Artforum. April 1976. pp.26-34.)
- 15 Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p68.
- 16 Chris Burden. *Shadow*. Performance. 1976. Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.
- 17 Burden, Chris. "Chris Burden." Flash Art. Vol 56/7. June/July 1975. p40.
- 18 Chris Burden. *Shout Piece*. Performance. August 21, 1971. "F-Space" Gallery, Santa Anna, California.
- 19 Chris Burden. *Prelude to 220, or 110*. Performance. September 10-12, 1971. "F-Space" Gallery, Santa Anna, California).
- 20 Chris Burden. *220*. Performance. October 9, 1971. "F-Space" Gallery, Santa Anna, California.
- 21 Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p69.
- 22 Chris Burden. *Trans-fixed*. Performance/documentation. April 23, 1974. Venice, California.
- 23 Chris Burden. *Through the Night Softly*. Performance/16mm film. September 12, 1973. Main Street, Los Angeles.



- 24 Chris Burden. *White Light/White Heat*. Performance. February-March, 1975. Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York.
- 25 Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p6.
- 26 Vito Acconci. *Claim*. Performance with video. 93 Grand Street, New York. three hours; September 10, 1971.
- 27 "Vito Acconci". *Avalanche*. no. 6. Fall 1972. p55.
- 28 Baudrillard, Jean. *The Ecstasy of Communication*. trans Bernard & Caroline Schutze. New York: Semiotext(e), 1988. p69.
- 29 *Prelude*, as implied in its title, led to a complimentary work, 220, in which Burden, along with three others clung to the top of ladders placed in a tank of water charged with electricity for six hours. Though thematically the work develops out of the earlier piece, it is less accessible, to all but those involved, having neither an audience nor, as in later works of this type, an uneasy relationship with its documentation.
- 30 Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p69.
- 31 *ibid.*, p69.
- 32 *ibid.*, p70.
- 33 Chris Burden. *Velvet Water*. Performance with closed-circuit television. School of the Art Institute of Chicago. May 7, 1974.
- 34 Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p69.
- 35 Burden, Chris, & Jim Moisan. "Border Crossing (Chris Burden questioned by Jim Moisan)." *High Performance*. Vol 2 no 1. March 1979. p6.
- 36 Chris Burden. *Doomed*. Performance. Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. April 1975.
- 37 Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p70.
- 38 A comparable association is invited in Abramovic and Ulay's *Nightsea Crossing*, in which the artists sat facing each other for extended periods of time in various locations around the world, watched in turn by the beholder (see McEvelley, Thomas. "Marina Abramovic/Ulay." *Artforum*. September 1983. pp.52-55.)
- 39 *ibid.*, p70.
- 40 *ibid.*, p70.
- 41 *ibid.*, p37.
- 42 Rosenthal, Rachel. "Performance and the Masochist tradition." *High Performance*. Winter 1981. p24.
- 43 Robert Morris. *Slab*. 1962-68. Painted Wood. 11 5/8 x 95 3/4 x 95 3/4 in.
- 44 Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus Giroux, 1973. p24.
- 45 *ibid.*, pp.10-11.
- 46 Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. p24.
- 47 *ibid.*, p21.
- 48 Burden, Chris. "Chris Burden." p40.
- 49 Baudrillard, Jean. "The Ecstasy of Communication." p131.

- 50        *ibid.*, p133.
- 51        Sontag, Susan. On Photography. p24.
- 52        *Deadman*. Photograph. 1972. Burden was arrested for causing a false emergency to be reported. The case was dismissed after a three day hearing.
- 53        Bear, Liza & Willoughby Sharp. "Chris Burden: The Church of Human Energy." p57.
- 54        Chris Burden. *Show the Hole*. Performance. Florence, Italy. March 4, 1980.
- 55        Burden, Chris. "Artist's Notes." High Performance. Summer 1980. p18.
- 56        Burden, Chris. Chris Burden 71-73. Los Angeles: Self-published, 1974.
- 57        Burnham, Linda Frye. "Performance Art in Southern California: An Overview." in Loeffler, Carl E., and Darlene Tong (eds.) Performance Anthology: Source Book for a Decade of California Performance Art. San Francisco: Contemporary Arts Press, 1980. p398.
- 58        Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984. p23.
- 59        *ibid.*, p21.
- 60        Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p71.
- 61        Olkowski-Laetz, Dorothea. "A Postmodern Language in Art." in Silverman, Hugh J. (ed.) Postmodernism - Philosophy and the Arts. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall Inc, 1990. p102.
- 62        *ibid.*, p102.
- 63        Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991. p3.
- 64        *ibid.*, pxxxi.
- 65        Heidegger, Martin. "The Origin of the Work of Art." trans. Hofstadter, Albert, cited in Olkowski-Laetz, Dorothea. p104.
- 66        Lyotard, Jean-François. "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" in Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition. p81.
- 67        Burden, Chris & Jan Butterfield. p71.
- 68        Scarry, Elizabeth. The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. p4.
- 69        *ibid.*, p5.
- 70        "Vito Acconci." Avalanche. p18.
- 71        *ibid.*, p18.
- 72        see Dry, Graham. "Joseph Beuys, Objekte." The Burlington Magazine. March 1980. p222. Also, Scarry refers to Beuys' *When you cut your finger, bandage the knife* as an example of the agency of the wound being substituted for the pain (Scarry, Elizabeth. p16.)
- 73        Scarry, Elizabeth. p52.
- 74        Carolee Schneemann. *Lateral Splay*. Performance. Judson Dance Theatre, New York. November 19-20, 1963. For a description of this

piece see Schneemann, Carolee More than Meat Joy McPherson,  
Bruce (ed.) New York: Documentext, 1979 pp47-49

75  
ibid., p47.

76  
Scarry, Elizabeth. p169

77  
Sontag, Susan Against Interpretation and other essays New York:  
Farrar Straus Giroux, 1961. pp.39-48

78  
Baudrillard, Jean p73

Robert Wilson's works, or "operas" as they have been referred to<sup>1</sup>, cannot be satisfactorily confined within an existing art form as they are indebted both to the time-based arts (dance, music, theatre, opera) and the plastic arts (painting, sculpture, architecture). It is the intention to highlight the different representational strategies at work in Wilson's pieces and illustrate how their coexistence disrupts the closure of the work. The length and complexity of the works under discussion is such as to preclude a satisfactory description of any one of them in their entirety. Attempts to record the totality of a Wilson production necessarily contain it within discourse, bringing it to a point of closure that, it is argued below, the work evades. Discussion of the work itself presupposes that it has a specific form and thus any critique wishing to cite Wilson as an artist evading discourse must be assiduous in its own coherency in order that the incoherency it addresses be "other" rather than oppositional. To this end, this chapter examines scenes or segments within scenes, conscious that they must take their place in a larger framework, but without seeking to bound the work by defining it. Without a unitary, stable form, the beholder is invited to engage with the object that Wilson provides in ways that cannot be determined prior to the experiencing of the work; its character is thus performative, the work occurring as the negotiation between object and beholder.

The productions of Robert Wilson are informed by his participation in the burgeoning New York art scene in the period 1962-66<sup>2</sup>. Wilson, whilst studying for an interior design degree at the Pratt Institute, produced his own films, dance and theatre work, in addition to designing the set for Jean-Claude van Itallie's *American Hurrah!*<sup>3</sup> Perhaps the most pervasive artistic movement of the period, Minimalism, has been observed by some critics to inform Wilson's work.<sup>4</sup> Spectacular epics

such as *Einstein on the Beach*<sup>5</sup> and *The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin*<sup>6</sup> challenge a reductionist<sup>7</sup> view of Minimalism, offering a more plausible aesthetic predicated on distinguishing the constituent circumstances of the work rather than attending to the resulting composition.

Many commentators approach Wilson's work from the perspective of the image.<sup>8</sup> He generates works from numerous quickly-drawn sketches rather than a written text so that the stage picture is not an interpretation of the original impulse filtered through another medium, from text to image, but rather an elaboration of elements already formulated. In the introduction to her book, *The Theatre of Images*, Bonnie Marranca suggests that in Wilson's theatre, the image has primacy over the text:

The absence of dialogue leads to the predominance of the stage picture in the Theatre of Images. This voids all considerations of theatre as it is conventionally understood in terms of plot, character, setting, language and movement. Actors do not create "roles". They function instead as media through which the playwright expresses his ideas; they serve as icons and images. Text is merely a pretext - a scenario.<sup>9</sup>

There are two caveats to this position, which are addressed in the following remarks. The first, concerns the possibility of an image being a discrete entity yet non-discernible, evading co-option within a representational frame. The second, relates to the validity of the term 'image' when referring to something that is occurrent rather than fixed. The definition of the word "image" - n. Artificial imitation of the external form of an object<sup>10</sup> - sets up a linear progression from the object, rendered by the artist into the work which is regarded as an image by the beholder. This progression, the process of representation, is,

according to Craig Owens, in an essay on Wilson's *Einstein on the Beach*, attacked in Modernist theory, which

presupposes that mimesis, the adequation of an image to a referent, can be bracketed or suspended, and that the art object itself can be substituted (metaphorically) for its referent.<sup>11</sup>

Such a condition privileges the object, which moves to a position of autonomy, and renders the beholder passive, unable even to carry out an act of re-cognition, (which would imply that the work relied on elements outside of itself to be known). Owens continues by establishing postmodernism as that which "neither brackets nor suspends the referent but works instead to problematise the activity of reference"<sup>12</sup>. The strategies Wilson employs to disrupt this activity are threefold; the coexistence of different forms; an adherence to form over content; and resistance to closure. Each of them are, to varying degrees, to be found within the operations of the others, though the emphasis on them individually shifts through the development of the director's work.

It is the intention to deal with elements from three of Wilson's productions, examining the manner in which the above strategies operate in relation to the individual works developed in the period from 1971 to 1976<sup>13</sup>. In the following remarks the term 'narrative' is employed when referring to its invitations toward construction of a unified meaning. It is not to be taken as interchangeable with the term 'representation' that figures in the final section, but as one of the methods by which it functions. Another of these methods, 'image', is briefly addressed, though only insofar as it relates to narrative.

## The theatre of images - watching paint dry and run

*Deafman Glance* was first performed on December 15th 1970 in Iowa. The following description of the piece comes from Stefan Brecht's account of the performance of February 25th, 1971 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music<sup>14</sup>. The production opens with the stage occupied only by an actress in an austere Victorian dress, and a small boy (see plate 32);



Plate 32. Robert Wilson. Prologue to *Deafman Glance*

The woman turns, slowly gloves her right hand in black, slowly pours milk in one of the glasses, with incredible slowness brings it over to the boy, he takes it without looking up, drinks a little, she waiting, she takes the glass back from him, brings it back to the table, picks up the knife, very slowly wipes it off, turns, walks, with a hint (only) of predatory stealth and power, back to the boy, leans over him, he is reading his book again, stabs him in the chest

(he is paying no attention), he collapses, she guides him down to the floor with her left, stabs him again, again very deliberately, carefully, in the back, withdraws the knife, walks back to the table, wipes off the knife again. Her action has been entirely unemotional...When she lifts the knife for the kill, a taller, older boy...ambles onto the stage, stands watching. She again pours milk, takes it over to the covered figure on the floor, pulls back the sheet, there is a sleeping Negro girl. Kneeling on one knee, she wakes her, gives her to drink, takes back the milk, puts it on the table, returns with the knife, stabs the sleeping girl in the chest, guides her down, stabs her in the back, rises. As she rises, she extends her hand over her victim as though to keep her down, ban her, quiet her. Utter silence in the white light. Except that as his sister (presumably) is stabbed the second time, the older boy starts screaming a discontinuous, almost neuter scream, emotionally colourless jabs at utterance, not too loud. She has walked back to the table, is wiping the knife off again in the gleaming white napkin...She walks over to the standing boy, passes her hand over his face, first touching his forehead, then his open mouth. His scream has gotten louder as she approached him. She smothers it at its loudest. Her gesture is that of reassurance.<sup>15</sup>

The above scene took from twenty minutes to over an hour to perform.<sup>16</sup> The slowness of the action is suggested by Brecht's description of minute details that would have gone unnoticed had the scene been played out at a faster pace, and the actress Sheryl Sutton confirms that in order to gauge the passage of time she broke the scene down into inner cells of contrasting speeds<sup>17</sup>. Rather than accepting that he works with an artificial construction of time, Wilson states that

Most theater deals with speeded-up time, but I use the kind of natural time in which it takes the sun to set, a cloud to change, a day to dawn. I give you time to reflect, to



meditate about other things than those happening on the stage. I give you time and space in which to think.<sup>18</sup>

The examples that Wilson gives of "natural time" are more likely to have been seen by the public in the representations arising from time-lapse photography rather than experienced in an unmediated state. In the "speeded-up time" of time-lapse photography detail is lost and meaning simplified to provide coherency: there is a clear delineation between the experiential that is unstructured and contingent on the circumstances of the person experiencing it, and the visual representation that is structured and predetermined. There is no such bipolar relationship between Wilson's "natural time" and that he ascribes to most theatre; both are structured, though the former is derived from a generative principle of Wilson's that the beholder has no access to, whilst the latter is derived from the narrative. Rather than moving to a position where time experienced in the theatre corresponds to that outside of it, where art might be said to be life, a synthesis of the sort attempted by some Happenings<sup>19</sup>, Wilson presents a notion of duration within a highly representational frame. That it is discernible as such, as opposed to being seamlessly integrated within the narrative or synchronised with time experienced outside it - 'real time' - confounds the possibility of regarding art and that beyond its parameters as oppositional.

The length of the scene is such that the beholder is invited to discern the passage of time outside of the temporal dimension of the stage, referring to the time that she has been present rather than the duration depicted by the actors. This much is a foundation of theatrical practice, enshrined in "the two hours traffick of our stage"<sup>20</sup> that encompasses the somewhat longer matching and dispatching of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Where Wilson's work differs is in opening up a space or caesura between the narrative and the time in

which it is played out. There is a generating principle behind the length of the scene (Wilson's) but it cannot be contained within the narrative. The director is attempting to say something without that something being reduced to narrative, or 'what is said.' Thus, the work has the quality of Lyotard's *event*, in which "something happens which is not tautological with what has happened"<sup>21</sup>.

Wilson's title arose from his collaboration with Raymond Andrews, a young deaf mute, whose drawings suggested a way in which the world might appear without the mediation of language<sup>22</sup>. Implicit in the length of the scene and its wordless execution is the notion that there is something to be conveyed that is non-discursive, that does not give itself up to form. In discussing the sculpture of Robert Morris, it was noted that the consideration of time with respect to the work undermined the autonomy of the object, rendering it susceptible to the considerations of the beholder rather than existing apart from her. The critic Michael Fried regards such "literalist" work as "paradigmatically theatrical"<sup>23</sup>; Rosalind Krauss succinctly states his position thus:

With regard to sculpture, the point on which the distinction between itself and theatre turns is, for Fried, the concept of time. It is an extended temporality, a merging of the temporal experience of sculpture with real time, that pushes the plastic arts into the modality of theatre. While it is through the concepts of presentness and instantaneousness that modernist painting and sculpture defeat theatre.<sup>24</sup>

In the context of the plastic arts, such a reappraisal of the art experience, whilst not eliminating the physically locatable artwork, nevertheless facilitated the emergence of a plethora of forms - Body Art, Conceptual Art, Performance - that did not rely on, and even called into question, the production of an object as a fundamental principle of art<sup>25</sup>.

The possibilities afforded the artist no longer tied to the production of a discrete object as indicative of their status is apparent in considering the interventions of practitioners such as Morris, Beuys and Burden. By contrast, the theatre, being, in Susanne Langer's terminology, one of the 'occurent' arts, necessarily utilising a temporal dimension, could not so lightly discover it anew. Langer's understanding of the quality of time in the theatre ties it indissolubly with the narrative thread;

...the theatre creates a perpetual present moment; but it is only a present filled with its own future that is really dramatic. A sheer immediacy, an imperishable direct experience without the ominous forward movement of consequential action, would not be so. As literature creates a virtual past, drama creates a virtual future. The literary mode is the mode of Memory; the dramatic is the mode of Destiny.<sup>26</sup>

In the opening scene of *Deafman Glance*, Wilson disrupts the narrative through-line by slowing down the action so that "the image is not grasped in continuity but is contemplated as a continuous present"<sup>27</sup>. His subject matter is not uneventful - had it been, the scene might easily have slipped into a representation of the mundane, the pacing conveying its lack of stimulation - but horrific. Its power is distanced by the contemplation that discerns not a woman killing her children, but a woman engaged in a number of activities, one of which is infanticide. The lack of emotion and violence in the scene further heighten the sense of contemplation, allowing the beholder to interpose her own feelings concerning Sutton's actions rather than be guided by a staging that called attention to the brutality and inhumanity of the act.

Jean-François Lyotard's assertion that "bullets would be nothing without narratives"<sup>28</sup> is pertinent to the reception of the scene; without the framework of a narrative in which to place the murders, they remain

undifferentiated elements of a larger structure that cannot be known in advance, but must be experienced. In the sense that an *a priori* system of values does not mediate the actions on stage, they can be said to be presentational rather than representational.

The image of Sheryl Sutton in the high-collared Victorian dress, with one hand wearing a black glove, recurs in other Wilson works.<sup>29</sup> Standing erect in front of a grey wall as the beholder gather for the performance, she is the most noticeable element on the stage, the only feature more vertical than horizontal; the other visible character, the young boy, sits on a low stool. Sutton's otherwise symmetrical appearance is compromised by the ungloved hand. The second glove, placed on the table beside her, together with a napkin, a pitcher of milk, two glasses and a knife, constitute signs for the discernible actions of the ensuing scene. This much accords with Langer's "present filled with its own future"<sup>30</sup>, though such is the wealth of matter relating to the subsequent action, in contrast with anything occurring at the moment of first regarding the scene, that the present might be said to coexist with its own future. The present moment is further emptied of significance because the beholder does not witness its start, but experiences it as a pre-existing condition of her environment. This serves to foreground the need to know what will happen and invites potential constructions of the future moment predicated on the dormant elements of the opening tableaux. Taken together these elements constitute an invitation to regard the scene as one would a painting rather than a work of theatre.

Were it possible to regard the scene in this manner, even without understanding its import, it would be a representation of a painting, and as such, an image. Because of the circumstances of this image's immanence, it cannot have a direct relationship with the beholder but must take into account the terms of the theatrical frame which is evident.

Lacking any additional matter within the stage parameters by which a set of relations may be determined, the image is not so much contained within the theatrical frame - an element of the stage picture - as coexistent with it. Where Craig Owens regards "relations obtaining among images" <sup>31</sup> - rather than in themselves as "isolated signs" <sup>32</sup> - as Wilson's underlying structure, one might regard relations obtaining among forms as an alternative means of addressing the work.

In applying the term, "theatre of images" to Wilson's work, critics imply a complementary role to those artists Fried regards as imbuing the object with theatricality; imagistic theatre finding its obverse in theatrical images. Even without the implications of such categorisation, both Robert Morris, one of Fried's *bête noires*, and Robert Wilson, call into question the terms of their primary mode of representation. The sculptor does so, in *Slab*, for example, by presenting a object deficient in content; Wilson, in the opening of *Deafman Glance*, presents a deficiency of content in relation to time. By instigating strategies of apprehension in the beholder, *Slab* could be said to generate, in accordance with Langer's definition of the dramatic, a present filled with its own future, whilst Wilson's "natural time" in the opening scene of *Deafman Glance* evokes the "presentness and instantaneousness"<sup>33</sup> that Fried regards as distinguishing painting and sculpture from theatre. If one accepts that the terms of another mode of representation may operate in Wilson's work, then one might usefully enquire as to its status - does it usurp the theatrical frame? does it coexist in an inferior position? and does the multiplicity of representational modes disrupt the representational ability of the work?

Stefan Brecht observes the interdependency of representational modes in his opening remarks on the work's form

Indubitably, [*Deafman Glance*] is a collage of images: though there are several ways in which it is other things also, i.e., not just that. It seems both imagery and performance: but performers creating images, i.e., performance only supplementally.<sup>34</sup>

Here, primacy is given to images, which, through the agency of the performers, cannot be distinguished from their creation, or, (recognising that they must give way to the succeeding image) their dissolution. The device of slowing down the events of the opening scene can be regarded as the means by which the two modes of representation can coexist, allowing the beholder to move freely between regarding the work as a sequence of static images or as an ongoing performance. Wilson highlights the disparity between the two with the example of a slow-motion film of a mother moving to embrace her child which clearly shows the infant's apprehension at the mother's lunge which then is transformed into a display of affection as its fears subside.<sup>35</sup>

Whilst the opening of *Deafman Glance* is austere, focusing entirely on a single event that is played out with the minimum of visual incident, it gives rise to a multitude of events occurring simultaneously. After a twenty minute entr'acte between the prologue and the announcement of the beginning of the play, the curtain rises on a stage populated with seemingly incongruous elements (see fig. 9 and plate 33). As the scene progresses it is evident that the space is not continuous, but divided into zones, each of which remains independent of the others. It is common for a staging to draw on the oppositions of the space to depict simultaneous scenes, e.g. downstage left against upstage right, and then to use lighting and scenery to separate the concurrent events. This device does not undermine the representational structure but rather reinforces it by making apparent a structure that can contain both space and time within it, rather than be subject to the fixity

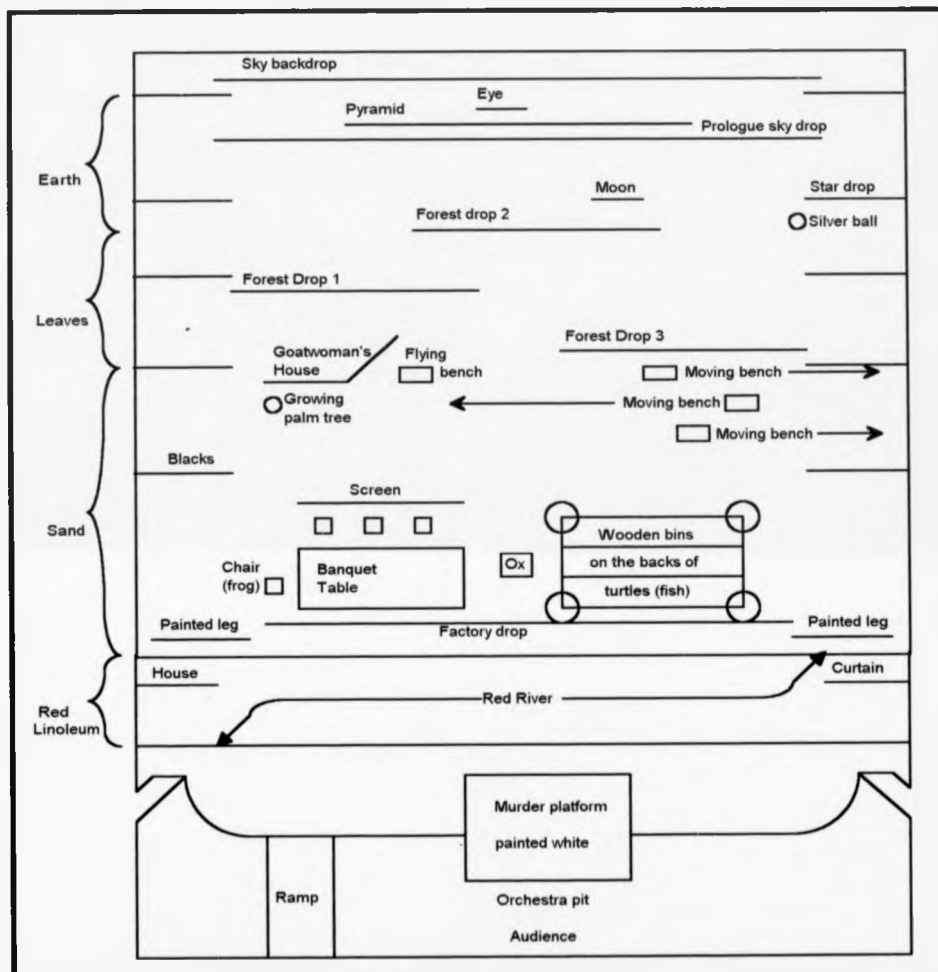


fig.9 stage plan for *Deafman Glance* Act 1

of an unmediated present. In discussing Boccioni's sculpture, that approximates the Cubist painting by presenting side and back views of the object within its frontal aspect, Rosalind Krauss indicates how such a formal departure from the mimetic serves to enhance the autonomy of the object:



Plate 33. Act I *Deafman Glance*

One view of the object is presented as the sum of all possible views, each one is understood to be a part of a continuous circumnavigation of the object spread out through space and time, but unified and controlled by the special kind of information which the transparency of the object makes clear to the viewer. In this single view, the experience of time and space is both summarised and transcended.<sup>36</sup>

Wilson's multi-focused staging, rather than amplify the formal terms by which the narrative operates, moves toward a condition in which it might be difficult to distinguish an encompassing set of terms. His adherence to the frontality of the proscenium stage and continual acknowledgement of the techniques of nineteenth-century stage illusion<sup>37</sup> bound the time and space in which his work occurs but without providing a unifying element from which they are determined. Each of the zones or bands relies on the largely horizontal movement of



performers and properties to maintain identity. This favours, or might be regarded as a consequence of, Wilson's working from two-dimensional sketches; perspective remains constant and the allusion to the flat field of painting can be maintained. Because all of these areas excepting the forestage (which is centrally sited) run the full width of the stage, occurrences further upstage have to be seen through the spaces arising in the downstage zones. Stefan Brecht's description of the piece throughout this section clearly conveys the sense of a roving eye having to make choices as to what to attend to: <sup>38</sup>

13. As the builders [of the bins] get on with their chores, something like a Red Indian with a tomahawk on the warpath, devilish-funny in red, with a long red train, by no means consistent, stalks onto the scene, furtively moving in the direction of the boy, as though intending him harm, but veering off to leave, somewhere behind him, harmless as a figure of the imagination, a boy's imagination.

14. Smoke has begun to whirl off the hut, it seems to be afire, we see red reflects through its large chapel window.

15. The forest is still, the forest noises continue. We more or less know the magician is in there, glimpse him occasionally between the sapling tree trunks. <sup>39</sup>

The banding of the stage denies a hierarchy of importance predicated on proximity to the beholder; if anything, the non-particular, ongoing activity occurs toward the front of the set as the workers construct the boxes, the guests are served at the table and the boy from the prologue fishes in the river while further off momentary occurrences take place. In a work such as The Performance Group's *Makbeth* <sup>40</sup>, which was played in numerous spaces on different levels throughout the performing environment, the beholder, by changing her vantage point or

looking in a different direction could determine what to attend to by excluding competing occurrences not in the direction she was facing. The frontality of *Deafman Glance* precludes such a partial, self-determined experience, offering instead a totality that resists attempts to determine how it might be regarded as such. The surrounding elements of *Environments* are compressed into a space directly in front of the beholder, denying her the ability to segregate the work by altering her field of vision, having instead to attempt the imposition of a structure that will relate seemingly disparate elements that occupy the same space. The work frustrates the linear evolution of a narrative as the passage of time, rather than elucidating what has gone before only allows for the introduction of further heterogeneous material to be placed before the beholder. The magician carries out a wake for the two dead children of the prologue, the single point of continuity between the present moment and what has gone before, yet he is seen only intermittently through the trees. The importance accorded the killing in the prologue can be regarded as a product of associating the considerable degree of time assigned to it as indicative of its import just as its subsequent peripheral status is predicated on its continuation in a less visible space.

Both space and time are regarded as constituents of the performance without being subjugated by a controlling narrative. In addition, Wilson's adherence to theatrical form further weakens the narrative's claim to authority over its circumstances. The utilisation of formal elements of staging - announcing the title of the play, employing a slow final curtain - look toward an understanding of the work as a play within a play<sup>41</sup>, although there are several problems arising from the imposition of such a metanarrative. The actor announcing *Deafman Glance* does so over an hour after the performance has begun and the slow curtain cannot help but be regarded in the context of Wilson's

"natural time", yet these demarcations are more concrete than anything that might bound the performance within which they are contained. Whilst there are these references to an interior play, they are in fact the collapsed terms of the surrounding structure, that, unable to function as a point of closure around a narrative, is sucked into the work itself in the process of trying to determine meaning. Where other stage works might invoke a "willing suspension of disbelief"<sup>42</sup>, they do so in order to impose belief in an alternate, holistic construction of the world whose spatial and temporal co-ordinates are determined by the narrative. Wilson describes the relationship between time and space thus;

Time is space, and time can't exist without space. There's always a balance between time and space; a certain tension exists between these two realities. Space for me is a horizontal line, something that is *here*, and time is something that is vertical...and when they cross at the centre *here*, it's cosmic. And this awareness of this cross can be more tense, less tense and that effects, ultimately either time or space, depending on the tension between the two forces.<sup>43</sup>

Employing his analogy, *Deafman Glance* would seem to operate by diverging from a unitary figure within which time and space are subsumed (the cross) and instead manipulating their point of intersection such that they are two distinct entities (lines) that necessarily must intersect, but at any number of possible points. The point at which they dissolve into the single structure could be regarded as the emergence of narrative as a distinct entity, providing a generative principle for two otherwise unbounded dimensions. By alternating the point of intersection, narrative structuring of time and space is not thereby rendered antithetical, but can be regarded as one of countless ways of dealing with the two entities.

*A Letter for Queen Victoria* was first performed on June 15, 1974.<sup>44</sup> Unlike *Deafman Glance*, the work has a considerable amount of dialogue, adding further matter to be accommodated within the discourse. Drama privileges the text as that element of performance which survives from one production to the next, such that comparisons between productions are predicated on the employment of the same dialogue as opposed to similar design or style of acting, for example.<sup>45</sup> By failing to comment on, or illuminate what is occurring during the performance, Wilson's text does not succeed in occupying a privileged position in the work. There are points of comparison with Hugo Ball's "sound poems"<sup>46</sup> and the spatial arrangement of concretist poetry<sup>47</sup>, though these mark a displacement of the linguistic by the visual; Wilson's employment of words is more akin to Allan Kaprow's description of their usage in *Happenings*;

A play assumes words to be the almost absolute medium. A Happening will frequently have words, but they may or may not make literal sense. If they do, their sense is not part of the fabric of "sense" which other non-verbal elements (noise, visual stuff, actions, etc.) convey. Hence, they have a brief, emergent and sometimes detached quality. If they do not make "sense", then they are heard as the sound of words instead of the meaning conveyed by them.<sup>48</sup>

Not only does the text fail to unite the disparate elements of the production, but it also has a very weak internal cohesion, suggesting thematic links and then disrupting them. Wilson referred to the speeches in the production as "supported dialogue - the lines should be delivered the way I heard them, as something secondary while doing something

else"<sup>49</sup>. An exchange at the beginning of Act 1, Section 1 is indicative of the dialogue that occurs throughout;

1 SHE BROKE HER NECK

2 THAT'S NOT WHAT I DID

1 OH YOU WERE

2 THANK YOU

1 YEAH WELL THAT STUFF

2 WERE THEY WERE THEY A...YEAH I KNOW

1 HAVE YOU BEEN HERE BEFORE?

2 NO, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME...OK, THANK YOU VERY MUCH

1 HAVE YOU BEEN HERE BEFORE?

2 NO, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME...OK, THANK YOU VERY MUCH

1 NO, GRACE, YOU NEVER HAVE TOLD ME ABOUT IT BUT SOMEDAY  
YOU MUST

2 NO, I HAVE NEVER HANDLED A PROBATE CASE, I'VE TOLD YOU  
THAT

1 THANK YOU GRACE I MEAN YOU'RE NOT A COOK...YOU

2 I MEAN I COME HOME FROM WORK AND EXPECT A MEAL ON THE  
TABLE I MEAN A MAN IS A WOMAN <sup>50</sup>

Whilst a reading of the above text could fashion some semblance of meaning and delineate the narrative posts of sender, addressee and message, the two performers (Sheryl Sutton and Cindy Lubar) disrupt the meaning by conducting an unspoken dialogue with their movements that bears no relation to the spoken text. The individual speech acts are comprehensible in isolation but lack a common context. Attention shifts from following a narrative contained within the dialogue, to establishing the circumstances in which it might take place. Where the time and space might usually be inferred from the speech, here the beholder is invited to compensate for the lack of any such identifiers by applying her own. The utterances are conversational (as opposed to declamatory) and suggest an effort at communication, though in rejecting discursive

reason, the speakers have difficulty in finding a point of common ground. Though the above extract contains several signifiers - I, here, this, Grace - they are without corresponding signifieds. This condition undermines the self-legitimizing function of narratives, which, as Lyotard notes "define what has the right to be said and done", their legitimacy arising from the simple fact that they do what they do.<sup>51</sup>

Elements of speeches recur throughout the four-act work, further lessening the text's ability to stand as a narrative: where the division of lines between the cast impinges on the spatial fixity of the dialogue, so its repetition thwarts attempts to assign it a temporal dimension. In the above excerpt, the exchange that begins with the question "Have you been here before?" invites the beholder to position it as 'the first time'. The repetition of the exchange undermines this positioning - the repetition cannot be 'the first time' - and calls into question the validity of the first occurrence - if it has been repeated once then it may already have been endlessly repeated in a text to which the beholder has no access. Larger portions of text are repeated in a highly structured fashion so that, for example, some hundred lines in Act 1, Section 1 are reproduced in Act 1, Section 2 and Act 1, Section 3. The beholder's familiarity with certain portions of the text on the second and third hearings may prompt her to identify the speeches as indivisible elements rather than follow their meaning, transforming the text from a system of linguistic signs through which the object may speak, into the object itself. This process is aided by alternation of the physical relationship between the two performers which marks a progression of the visual score, whilst the text remains constant. The notion of text as other than signifier is also evident in the production's show curtain and the large backdrop in Act 3, both of which consist of a design composed of letters, in the latter instance a symmetrical arrangement of the words "chitter" and "chatter". At the opening of Act 3, all the cast recite the words so that they are given on auditory, semantic and visual levels

simultaneously. The written text could be regarded as "supported" by virtue of the orderliness of the words' presentation, which emphasises the mannered nature of conversation, and the onomatopoeic quality of their spoken form.

By treating text as both audible noise and visual image in addition to its linguistic function, Wilson looks toward bringing Lyotard's figural to visibility. In *Introducing Lyotard* <sup>52</sup>, Bill Readings cites Lyotard's distinction between discourse (the grid within which terms are placed in oppositional positions so that they may be represented) and its unspeakable other, *figure* (which works within and against discourse, opening its oppositions to "a radical heterogeneity or singularity" <sup>53</sup>), with reference to the identifying of a letter on a page;

The letter signifies by virtue of its opposition to the rest of the system from which it comes. On the other hand, in the plastic space of vision, the line wanders, differently. And the two spaces cannot be finally separated; the plastic function of the line works figurally even in the most prosaic page of text. To read the letter as line, as is always possible, is to render the graphic letter's transparent function as signifier opaque...reading the line in the letter evokes an unrecognisable activity, a seeing devoid of any meaning, underlying the claim to decipher the letter as recognisable meaning. <sup>54</sup>

It is this "seeing devoid of meaning", in the sense that it evades co-option within the system of discourse, that is evoked by the treatment of text in *Queen Victoria*. The failure to derive meaning from the pattern of words on the back drop arises from the "blocking together of the visible and the textual by holding both elements in the same space in a kind of superimposition without privilege",<sup>55</sup> the beholder discerns not meaning, but meanings. The plurality of signification does not resolve

itself with the merging of the incommensurable elements but rather disrupts the discourse by admitting into it elements that can be distinguished from one another but cannot be related in terms of opposition. Because the meaning is not given, the work invites a reappraisal of discourse, questioning its ability to represent, or, more particularly, the limits to what it can bring to representation. This undermines the status of discourse as a "grand narrative",<sup>56</sup> and, by inference, puts into doubt the validity of all grand narratives. The beholder can no longer situate herself as the oppositional "other" of that which is represented. She cannot place herself temporally (as *not* of the represented time) nor spatially (as *not* of the space of the representation) because neither the space nor time of the representation are locatable without recourse first to the beholder. This inclusion of the beholder within the terms of the representation's immanence is examined below with reference to Christopher Knowles' extended monologue.

The only point in *Queen Victoria* when there is a degree of continuity in the subject matter of the text occurs in Act 1, Section 4. An actor recites 'The Sundance Kid', Christopher Knowles' poem inspired by the film character.<sup>57</sup> Where the other speeches move to a point at which they declare their function without engaging in coherent discourse, here there are no disruptions to the discursive reasoning of the text. In *Deafman Glance*, the unitary action of the opening scene, in contrast to the simultaneous occurrence of seemingly disparate activities that follows, is rendered problematic by creating a space between the narrative and the time it occupies. Knowles' recital in *Queen Victoria* marks a lull in the verbal exchanges that emanate from the performers without any discernible logic. Whilst it lacks the unitary focus of *Deafman Glance's* prologue, it is played in front of a dividing grid of bars that partially masks Sutton and Lubar and the two dancers who spin at



varying speeds throughout almost the entire production (plate 34). The actor reads the text from an illuminated chair that faces toward stage left. Another actor in an identical chair sits opposite him, whilst Christopher Knowles supports himself on a stationary bicycle, back-peddalling, against the speaking actor's chair. The comparative stillness of both scenes allow the beholder to regard key elements from the productions (the separation of time and narrative and the stripping of meaning from the text respectively) to be held up for examination. Furthermore, both scenes foreground the perceptual insights afforded the differently-abled Raymond Andrews and Christopher Knowles.

The Sundance Kid is approximately one hundred lines in length. The opening line, "The Sundance Kid is Beautiful", not only provides the context for those that follow, but the majority of the words. Although it is fascinating in its own right as an insight into the mentation of an autistic, its value within the context of *Queen Victoria* arises from its questioning of discursive reasoning that is elsewhere assiduously avoided. Rather than expand on the opening line, Knowles plays it back and forth, changing tense and emphasis, elaborating on different elements;

THE SUNDANCE KID WAS BEAUTIFUL  
YEAH IT WAS BEAUTIFUL  
THE  
BEAUTIFUL BEAUTIFUL  
THE SUNDANCE KID COULD DANCE AROUND  
SO THE SUNDANCE KID WAS BEAUTIFUL  
YEAH  
DANCE DANCED  
THE SUNDANCE KID WAS BEAUTIFUL <sup>58</sup>

Through the manipulations of the phrase its discursive meaning becomes incidental. The words are emptied of signification through



Plate 34. Act I Section 4, *A Letter for Queen Victoria*

repetition, deconstruction and a disregard for comprehensible phrasing. As with the opening of *Deafman Glance*, save for its extension over time, it would be unproblematic. This extension, however, both introduces the polysemy discussed above (in this instance, the poem invites comprehension as discourse, sound, and as structure) and implicates the beholder in its workings. The beholder cannot merely choose the most appropriate mode of representation without marginalising some elements of the speech. Whereas in poetry, the discursive often allows the audible to surface (in alliteration, dissonance, onomatopoeia), the primacy of the linguistic mode is rarely questioned, but rather draws strength from its ability to encompass "a momentary terror of uncertain signs"<sup>59</sup>. In *The Sundance Kid* section, Knowles' poem continues an ambivalence toward the text's status that begins as the work commences; there is no reason to suggest that Knowles is offering the

beholder a period of coherency, re-establishing discursive reason as the mode of textual representation.<sup>60</sup> Thus, the beholder is invited to regard any way of seeing as a (self-conscious) way rather than *the* (subconscious) way. Devoid of significant form, the words/noises/patterns emanating from the actor must be situated with respect to the beholder (rather than the beholder site herself as the representation's "other"). The speech does not look outside of the circumstances in which the beholder is to be found; it is insufficiently fixed to look beyond the circumstances of its occurrence. The relationship between what is occurring on stage and those regarding it is predicated not on polarisation but a comparable state of mind, though a difference in activity.

Where mainstream theatre empowers the performer and director, demanding that they make decisions concerning the nature of the work, but require the beholder to regard it as it was intended to be, Wilson's productions invite far greater decision-making on the part of the beholder. In preparing his actors for a production, Wilson would seem to eliminate the element of expression;

What will happen as you repeat the piece is that it will become mechanical. Not until it becomes mechanical will you be free to create, to beat the machine.<sup>61</sup>

Wilson attempts to avoid a deterministic theatre that succeeds in illuminating the skills of the actor, as representative of type, at the expense of the characters of individuals. Wilson's company, The Byrd Hoffman School of Byrds<sup>62</sup>, with whom he worked up until *The \$ Value of Man*<sup>63</sup> in 1975, was comprised almost entirely of non-actors. One of the exceptions, Sheryl Sutton, describes the condition in which she appeared in Wilson's works as "being so comfortable that you don't feel the necessity to express yourself".<sup>64</sup> She regards the lack of

communication with the audience through channelled expression as a distinguishing feature of Wilson's theatre:

Unlike most experimental theatre, there's no interaction. We of the stage are doing something for you the audience and you have to watch - or you don't have to watch. That's the major difference, there's this possibility of choice and that's unique to Bob Wilson's theatre. Because the actors promote themselves in most kinds of theatre, the audience is obliged to watch.<sup>65</sup>

Sheryl Sutton suggests that not only are the audience not obligated to watch, the performers are best adapted to the work when it is not their central focus, echoing Brecht's comment concerning supplemental performance;

...the more things you have to perform the easier it is to function and still have this inner screen...Of course you need to be present in a very strong way but what I think Bob really needs is people who are dreaming when they are performing the actions and words he has given them.<sup>66</sup>

In this respect, there is an equivalence between actor and beholder in that neither of them are required to enter into the obligations of their *a priori* roles. The beholder is empowered to look or not look, or, more significantly, shifting the terms by which she meets the occurrence, not *just* looking, but experiencing the work by placing herself in relation to it. This differs from the experiential nature of contemporaneous work to be found not only in environmental productions, such as the aforementioned *Makbeth*, but also in Robert Morris' grey polyhedrons<sup>17</sup> and, to some degree, various Happenings,<sup>68</sup> because the beholder's placement with respect to the work is entirely mental rather than physical. The terms of the beholder's engagement with *Queen Victoria*

are predetermined; she is not empowered to regard it from a different perspective and must therefore consider what is before her as constituting the work's totality. Allan Kaprow's *18 Happenings in 6 Parts*<sup>69</sup> does not afford any participant a complete knowledge of the work because its various components occur simultaneously in different spaces, whereas Morris' polyhedrons cannot be known in their totality because no one vantage point provides a complete view of them. In both these instances the work disrupts closure by showing the beholder's/participant's position (and thereby her experience of the work) to be arbitrary and as a consequence to be taken into consideration in determining the nature of the work. Wilson does not require the beholder to construct the work from her movement through or around it but instead provides everything within her direct line of vision. While this may seem to provide fertile ground for establishing the posts of narrative - sender, addressee, referent - the disruption of the narrative structure is such that sender and referent cannot be delineated.

Just as the formal structure of *Deafman Glance* collapsed into the performance, so too do the identities and intentions of the performers as the narrative seeks to find a fixed point from which to establish itself. In such circumstances, the addressee's task - and the terms of engagement with the performance leave no doubt that the beholder remain the addressee rather than actively transmit her own contribution to the work would seem to be to approach the work conscious of the conflation of sender and referent. Such a condition calls attention to the distinction between the reception and interpretation of phenomena. Wilson acknowledges as much by discussing the two processes in terms of exterior and interior screens that process conscious perception and the unmediated subconscious acknowledgement of phenomena respectively;

In the course of Wilson's thinking about the nature of [Raymond] Andrew's perceptions, it occurred to him that everyone sees and hears on two different levels. On the one hand, we experience sensations of the world around us on what he calls an "exterior screen". This is the basis for most of our visual and audial impressions of the people and situations we encounter. On the other hand, we also see and hear on an "interior screen"; but we usually are not aware of it, except, for instance, when we are asleep and dreaming. But Wilson maintains that the interior screens are operating all the time, even when we are only paying attention to the exterior screens.<sup>70</sup>

There is a degree of concordance between Wilson's interior screen and Lyotard's notion of the *event* in that they both acknowledge the particularity of narrative. The exterior screen records what happens as a unitary whole, creating a narrative out of a larger body of material, much of which is discarded, whilst the interior screen, perhaps lacking the ordering characteristics of its counterpart, can only record the occurrence taking place, the fact that it happens rather than what it is that takes place; Lyotard's *event* is similarly distinct from the occurrence.<sup>71</sup> The interior screen and the *event* cannot be posited as simply the undifferentiated mass of phenomena that narrative emerges from through a process of selective subtraction, because items are extracted from the unmediated totality by forging links with what already persists in the beholder's mind.

This process is both the most useful and ultimately limiting characteristic of narrative in that it calls upon a lexicon of shared assumptions to enhance the throughput of information. The beholder's seemingly innocuous recording of "what happens" not only requires a complicity in these shared assumptions, but also necessitates that they persist as transparent, self-evident truths. Narrative is resistant to moves

that seek to evade it, co-opting them by establishing their oppositional status to a pre-existing condition, as in "anti-art". Rather than attempt such moves, Wilson immerses his production in objects and images that call upon this collective lexicon, disrupting the formation of narrative by their juxtaposition and their density, which is accentuated by the non-hierarchical use of space, discussed above. This density is not primarily a physical condition - Wilson frequently errs toward a relatively sparse stage - but the consequence of the few elements of the set projecting conflicting meanings rather than a single interpretation.

In the first interchange between Sheryl Sutton and Cindy Lubar, a fish tank sits downstage right, and they are accompanied by a solo violin, whilst the two dancers spin on the forestage. Lubar has a white cloth draped on her shoulder that reaches to the ground some eight feet



Plate 35. Cindy Lubar, Act 1 *A Letter for Queen Victoria*

A	HAP HAT HAP	AAAAAAAAAAAAO	CONFORMING	O
AO	HATH HIP HA	AAAAOAOAOA	VCONFORMIN	OK
OAOA	HAT HIP HAP	AAAAOAOAOA	VECONFORMI	AOKO
XXXXX	HATH HAP HA	AAOAOAO	VERCONFORM	LAOKOK
AOAOAOA	HIP HIT HATH	AOAOA	VERYCONFOR	LLAOKOKO
XXXXXXXXX	HATH HAP HI	OAO	VERYVCONFO	ELLAOKOKOK
XXXXXXXXXXXXX	HAP HI HATH	AO	VERYVECONF	WELLAOKOKOK
OAOAOAOAOAO	HI HI HAP HA	O	VERYVERCON	AWELLAOKOKOKO

fig. 10 Backdrop for *A Letter for Queen Victoria*

behind her, her body forming the upright of a right-angled triangle (plate 35). Sutton stands approximately two feet above the stage floor, her platform covered by a black cape that reaches from her neck to the ground, again forming a triangle, though resembling an elongated pyramid in shape. These elements, combined with the disjointed text and accompanying contradictory gestures discussed above do not lend themselves to a unified interpretation, requiring instead that the interplay between disparate entities be considered rather than their value as signifiers. This favours the condition of the *event*, registering a disequilibrium predicated on the resistance of the distinct elements as opposed to a consideration of the elements themselves.

The resistance of elements manifests itself in a concern with structure, alluded to by many critics,<sup>72</sup> that threatens to reintroduce narrative. In *Queen Victoria*, a central motif that arises from a shift in attention from individual elements to their relationship is the envelope that is apparent in the triangular images, the placement of objects and the patterning of words on the backdrop (see fig. 10). Just as text is employed in a variety of ways, so the envelope motif operates within, with, against and outside of the performance. The manner in which a motif looks toward the reintroduction of narrative, suggesting a point of closure but in effect disrupting such a possibility is examined below with reference to *Einstein on the Beach*.



## Infinity divided by three

---

Wilson's first collaboration with Philip Glass is perhaps his most celebrated work, and the only one thus far to be restaged in a new production<sup>73</sup>. It was first staged in its entirety on July 25th 1976 at the Festival D Avignon, France. The indeterminate length and modulation of Glass's compositions at that time <sup>74</sup> would seem to accord with Wilson's concern for "natural time" and the "continuous present" recognised by others in his work. Certainly, Glass' very evident adherence to structure was complemented by Wilson's tripartite arrangement of elements. Though spanning four acts, divided by five entr'actes or, as Wilson refers to them, acknowledging their function as pivotal joints, "knee plays", the work repeats three images - a train, a trial and a field - that are coupled one with another in each possible combination<sup>75</sup>. The work is arranged thus:

### Kneeplay 1

Act I Scene 1A a train

Scene 2A a trial (a bed)

### Kneeplay 2

Act II Scene 3A a space ship above a field

Scene 1B a train

### Kneeplay 3

Act III Scene 2B a trial (a bed/a prison)

Scene 3B a space ship above a field

### Kneeplay 4

Act IV Scene 1C a building (a train)

Scene 2C a bed

Scene 3C interior of a space ship

### Kneeplay 5 <sup>76</sup>

The three-part structure is further enhanced by the multitude of triangles and triangular objects that are apparent in the course of the work. Stage movement is generally confined to angles of ninety and forty-five degrees, outlining triangular paths. Stefan Brecht is vociferous in his dismissal of such a structure:

...the elements of the setting emerge only as formal and incidental elements. They are not perceived as subject matter, nor in their own nature, nor do their relations to one another or, especially, to the play's persons, inform one's experience of the play. Instead the three graphic themes and their alternation preoccupy one, surface elements irrelevant to Wilson and to oneself. One watches appearances and enjoys them aesthetically. The play's content remains contingent on interpretation.<sup>77</sup>

Much of what Brecht espouses is valid, though he seems to find a sufficiency in the formal structure, the "surface elements", even while "elements of the setting" (taking these to be "what happens") do not contribute to an understanding of the work. His approach is signalled by the heading given to the second part of *Theatre of Visions*, "Assault on Speech. Decline of the theatre of visions, 1974-77". It will be argued that the very visibility of the structure calls attention to that which it displaces, and finds in this "other" relations obtaining between elements. The interpretation given below is not intended to be definitive but to illustrate where and how meaning might enter Wilson's work. It is suggested that in arriving at the interpretation, the terms by which the work would seem to represent have been disrupted.

Act I, scene 1A opens on a stage bare save for a white carpet, a grey backdrop and, stage left, a tall signal tower with a signal arm extending horizontally from near its top. Lucinda Childs enters stage right, dressed "like Einstein" (in Wilson's conception of the man) in shirt

and braces, grey trousers and black tennis shoes. A boy in identical dress becomes visible on the tower's protrusion. Childs commences to mark out a diagonal line with a purposeful walk/dance back and forth, always facing the audience. In her hand she holds a piece of chalk with which she makes staccato gestures as if writing down flashes of inspiration. Against the backdrop a near life-size locomotive (in low relief rather than three-dimensional) enters stage left billowing smoke and progressing toward centre stage at a considered pace<sup>78</sup>. The train comes to a halt and the stage picture - train and boy immobile, Childs still pacing out her line - is held for perhaps a minute before the lights go out.

The above segment occupies some five minutes of the forty minute scene. Running parallel with it is Glass's score, that heralds the appearance of the train, with a driving, crescendoing theme that peaks at the moment of arrival. When the train stops, the music shifts from a repetitiveness suggesting mechanical motion to one conveying something jamming, getting stuck. With the darkening of the stage, the repetition gives way to dissolution, diaphanous moves toward diaspora.

The section contains three elements - tower, train and dancer - each of which exists primarily in a single dimension, or moves along a primary plane: height, width and depth respectively. The lines of the train's cow-catcher and chimney are noticeably triangular (plate 36).<sup>79</sup> All of these constructions give themselves easily to representation, though possibly at the expense of details that sit uncomfortably within the structure: Childs' gestures are straining toward communicating something that cannot be seen. Where in *Queen Victoria*, the figural became evident through the blocking together of the textual and the visible, here the gestural (Child's drawing) looks toward the visible (the unseen marks she makes in the air) which in turn might suggest the



Plate 36. Act I Scene 1a *Einstein on the Beach*

textual (presuming her to be Einstein and the activity she is engaged in is formulating an equation). Again, a tripartite structure is placed on the work, but the significance is elusive. Philip Glass' description of the music for this segment provides a way of approaching the work as a whole;

I have used rhythmic cycles (repeating fixed rhythmic patterns of specific lengths) to create extended structures in my music by superimposing two different rhythmic patterns of different lengths. Depending on the length of each pattern, they will eventually arrive together back at their starting points, making one complete cycle. In this case, three repeats of the upper part are equal in length to four repeats of the lower part.<sup>80</sup>

The condition, three against four, underscores Einstein. The arrangement of the thrice repeated three themes over four acts indicates this tension operating across the length of the work, but it is apparent within and throughout its performance.

Wilson's works tend to employ the proscenium much in the same way that a painter employs the frame; as a way of enclosing an image. In his drawings, the painterly function of the proscenium is apparent, no more so than those for *Einstein*. In particular, a sketch for Act 1, Scene 1<sup>81</sup> is notable for the contrast between the thick rectangular edging of the stage boundary and the dense triangular forms of the train's smoke stack and cow-catcher. From being a necessary but largely unnoticed element of the staging, the proscenium becomes a counterpoint to the geometry of the stage picture. Further attention is drawn to the proscenium by the division of the space within;

In designing the opera [Wilson] mentally divided the stage's plan and elevation with three lines, creating a network of cubes stacked four deep horizontally and vertically. People and things tend to relate in three-dimensional space in *Einstein*... They also tend to move along angles of 45 and 90 degrees.<sup>82</sup>

The three imaginary lines of the stage space are completed, made into four, by the physically verifiable limits of the stage frame. In all these instances, whilst there is a tension between an evident three-part structure and a move to complete it, to make it into one comprised of four elements, it is not an oppositional construction. They are contained one within the other; to regard both simultaneously is to evoke the figural, blocking together the incommensurable.<sup>83</sup> The tripartite elements give themselves to representation: in the segment referred to above one could include the triangular objects, the three stage elements in the first

scene, the predominant three note bassline of Glass' music. The four-part structure persists as one of enablement and containment and links the tripartite elements to the protagonist, whose work looks toward the perception of space within the context of the fourth dimension, time<sup>84</sup>. (In *Queen Victoria*, the motif of the envelope both enables and contains the subject matter, the letter.)

These metanarratives, supposedly bringing the work to a point of closure, are rendered untenable by their dual status as both facilitators and containers of meaning. In *Einstein*, Wilson uses both space and time to address the relationship between them such that the one cannot distinguish what is being said from the act of saying it because both utilise the same material. Earlier, the distinction was made between Lyotard's *event* and narrative on the level of a particular stage image in which the discordant elements resisted conformity to a narrative structure. Taking the work in its entirety, embracing structure and theme, narrative would seem to adhere almost by default, echoing Franz Kafka's dictum on life; "Because it ends ... that's the meaning". It is the interchangeability of structure and image that disrupts such a closure; at the centre of the work there is no greater or lesser density than at the surface. Sheryl Sutton has suggested that "the emblem of Wilson's theatre might be the onion: layer upon layer but no core" <sup>85</sup>.

Einstein's life spanned the transition from the age of steam to the dawning of nuclear power, referred to in Wilson's work by the train and the spaceship respectively.<sup>86</sup> The production does not simply follow a diachronic progression but holds them both present simultaneously. Thus, in the first field scene (Act II scene 3A) the spaceship is already present (plate 37), seemingly distanced from the age of steam in spatial rather than temporal terms. This relates both to the particular image and the production's theme and structure of the spatial having to be

scene, the predominant three note bassline of Glass' music. The four-part structure persists as one of enablement and containment and links the tripartite elements to the protagonist, whose work looks toward the perception of space within the context of the fourth dimension, time<sup>84</sup>. (In *Queen Victoria*, the motif of the envelope both enables and contains the subject matter, the letter.)

These metanarratives, supposedly bringing the work to a point of closure, are rendered untenable by their dual status as both facilitators and containers of meaning. In *Einstein*, Wilson uses both space and time to address the relationship between them such that the one cannot distinguish what is being said from the act of saying it because both utilise the same material. Earlier, the distinction was made between Lyotard's *event* and narrative on the level of a particular stage image in which the discordant elements resisted conformity to a narrative structure. Taking the work in its entirety, embracing structure and theme, narrative would seem to adhere almost by default, echoing Franz Kafka's dictum on life; "Because it ends ... that's the meaning". It is the interchangeability of structure and image that disrupts such a closure; at the centre of the work there is no greater or lesser density than at the surface. Sheryl Sutton has suggested that "the emblem of Wilson's theatre might be the onion: layer upon layer but no core" <sup>85</sup>.

Einstein's life spanned the transition from the age of steam to the dawning of nuclear power, referred to in Wilson's work by the train and the spaceship respectively.<sup>86</sup> The production does not simply follow a diachronic progression but holds them both present simultaneously. Thus, in the first field scene (Act II scene 3A) the spaceship is already present (plate 37), seemingly distanced from the age of steam in spatial rather than temporal terms. This relates both to the particular image and the production's theme and structure of the spatial having to be



Plate 37. Act II Scene 3a, *Einstein on the Beach*

considered with respect to the temporal and vice versa. It is this "continuous present" that pervades the work from the level of barely discernible minutiae to its undecided status as an art form or forms that gives it cohesion yet denies it a totality: there is no "grand theme" that embraces the work without also being a very particular element within it.

Narrative requires a sense of space and of time, be it past or future, that is distinct from that in which it is played out: Performance and text, representer and represented, are (it seems irrevocably) split. Theatrical representation establishes itself in that rift which it alone creates between the tangible physical presence of the performer and that absence which is necessarily implicated in any concept of imitation or signification. The imitated action (the theatrical signified) is situated outside of the closed circuit



established by the copresence of performer and spectator.  
Thus what is represented is always an elsewhere.<sup>87</sup>

The *event*, in contrast, cannot admit of such displacement: "it happens" cannot be affirmed other than by direct experience. Wilson maintains presentness despite the beholder's ability to affirm that one occurrence preceded another by repeating, or seeming to repeat, elements and employing "natural time" that in its length invites the beholder to regard it as always being present, rather than remembering a prior moment or looking forward to a subsequent one.

## Conclusion

---

The condition Wilson's work looks toward is situated alongside, but not contained within, a narrative frame. It approaches co-option within the frame both as it touches on the representable - recognisable, seemingly understandable elements - and as it invites a passive acceptance of a meditative state, lulling the beholder back into a receptive, non-participatory state, before a completed work. The work resists closure, however, not by distancing itself from discourse, but allowing its terms to be seen within the work. The relations that obtain among and between elements of representation, subjected to stretching (narrative and time) and conflation (modes of representation) constitute part of the way Wilson's productions evade co-option. This evasion is made more apparent by the director's adherence to the form of the highly illusionistic nineteenth-century theatre to the extent that its terms can be seen to fall within the content of the work rather than simply facilitating its transmission. Wilson does not actively resist representation but instead accepts it as a fragment of the work, an element, like both space and time, that has no *a priori* place within his schema. Where narrative might normally establish itself at a very

particular conjunction of space and time ('the cross' in Wilson's parlance), in the three works discussed above it finds these coordinates to be indeterminate such that it can only fix what it is through recourse to itself. Though this suggests a potentially existential coming into being, it is undermined by the absence of any central position around which the accretion of essence might occur. Narrative is assumed to be present because of the formal situation in which the work is presented, yet to come into being it has to call upon these formal terms, collapsing them into the work, such that its moment of immanence coincides with the absence of the terms it requires in order to operate.

The opening of *Deafman* is highly representational, perhaps too much so, as it hinges on the cusp between the fixity, the presentness, of the image and the recognition of the passage of time inherent in narrative. To conclude that the work possess a 'presentness' is to accept its unstable condition with respect to time-based modes of representation. The corollary also obtains; that its images are imbued with the theatrical. The "presentness" differs from that which Fried ascribes to Caro's sculptures because Wilson's works are not autonomous (and neither are they "completed" by the beholder) but instead foreground and attempt to maintain a condition in which their presence (and by extension that of those regarding them) exceeds their particular characteristics - what they are. Though Wilson's theatre has been described as apolitical or even escapist in its apparent refusal to declare a position on contemporary issues<sup>88</sup>, the presentness that it looks toward invites an enablement on the part of both performer and beholder that is neither historically determined or predicated on opposition - the normalising tendency of representation.

1 In Gruen, John. "Is it a Play? An Opera? No it's a Wilson." The New York Times, 16 March 1975, p7. Wilson reasons that his works be considered operas because "their construction is musical. By that I mean there is an architectural arrangement of sounds and words and movements. Themes appear and reappear like themes in music. I m not interested so much in literary storytelling as in stories that are being told through themes "

2 The diversity of work produced in this period is suggested by numerous publications. See for example Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1966

3 Wilson is credited with the setting and as co-designer of the dolls in the "Motel" section of van Itallie's play, first performed on 28/04/65 at Cafe La Mama E.T.C.

4 see for example Armstrong, Gordon S. "Images in the interstice: The Phenomenal Theatre of Robert Wilson." Modern Drama Vol.31 January 1988 and Rockwell, John. "The Death and Life of Minimalism." The New York Times, 21 December 1986, pp.1,29 [sec.2].

5 First performed on 25/07/76 at the Festival D Avignon, Avignon, France

6 First performed on 14/12/73 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York.

7 see Greenberg, Clement. "Recentness of Sculpture" from the exhibition catalogue American Sculpture of the Sixties. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1967 in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E P Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968 pp.180-186, in which it is argued that "Minimal Art remains too much a feat of ideation, and not enough anything else."

8 The obvious example is Marranca, Bonnie. The Theatre of Images. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977. Others include Langworthy, Douglas. "'Listen to the pictures" Robert Wilson & German Theatre Criticism." Theater December 1991, pp.35-40. and Siegel, Marcia B. "A theatre of the mind's eye." Sunday Herald Traveller, 21 March 1971.

9 Marranca, Bonnie. The Theatre of Images. pp x-xi.

10 Fowler, H.W. & F.G. (eds.) The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

11 Owens, Craig. "The Allegorical Impulse - Part 2." October Vol.13, 1980, pp 79-80

12 ibid., p80.

13 Wilson continues to produce a prolific and diverse body of work, the three productions considered are not to be thought representative of the oeuvre, but a selection of the director's output in a particular period.

14 see Brecht, Stefan. The original theatre of the City of New York From the mid-60s to the mid-70s Book 1 - The Theatre of visions. Robert Wilson Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978 pp 54-140.

15 ibid., pp 54-5.

16 Shyer, Laurence. Robert Wilson and his Collaborators. New York: Theatre Communications Group Inc, 1989. p6.

17 ibid., p6.

18 Jones, Robert. "Robert Wilson's 'Einstein' returns to the stage." The New York Times, 2 December 1984, pp 5,24

19 for example Allan Kaprow's Self-Service documented in Kaprow, Allan. "Self-Service: a Happening." The Drama Review, Spring 1968, pp 160-164.

20 Shakespeare, William. Romeo and Juliet prologue l.12.

- 21 Lyotard, Jean-François. The Differend: Phrases in Dispute trans. G Van den Abbeele. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979. p79.
- 22 see Brecht, Stefan. "Appendix 5. Robert Wilson on his work with Raymond Andrews on Deafman Glance and on getting the play financed." in Theatre of Visions. pp 428-432.
- 23 Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." Artforum June 1967. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E P Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968. p145.
- 24 Krauss, Rosalind. Passages in Modern Sculpture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1977. pp 203-4.
- 25 see, for example Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years. The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.
- 26 Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from Philosophy in a New Key. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953. p307.
- 27 Deak, Frantisek. "Robert Wilson." The Drama Review. Vol.18 no.2 [T62] June 1977. p71.
- 28 Lyotard, Jean-François. "Lessons in Paganism." trans. Macey, David. in Lyotard, Jean-François. The Lyotard Reader. Benjamin, Andrew (ed.) Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989. p126.
- 29 Shyer, Laurence. Robert Wilson & His Collaborators. pp 7-8.
- 30 Langer, Susanne K. p307.
- 31 Owens, Craig. "'Einstein on the Beach': The Primacy of Metaphor." October no.4. Fall 1977. p27.
- 32 ibid. p27.
- 33 Fried, Michael. p146.
- 34 Brecht, Stefan. pp 105-6.
- 35 Shyer, Laurence. pxvi.
- 36 Krauss, Rosalind. p56.
- 37 Wilson's productions are full of the grand illusions of the stage - people in flying harnesses, rising platforms and huge trucks. Though he is credited with lighting "unparalleled in American theatre" (Howell, John. "Forum: What a Legend Becomes." Artforum March 1985. p90), the complexity and breadth of his use of staging is not so well documented. See Wetzsteon, Ross. "Mounting Einstein: There's no business like the Avant-Garde Business." The Village Voice. 6 December 1976. pp 113-5. and Baker, Rob. "The Mystery is in the Surface." Theatre Crafts. Vol.19 no.8. October 1985. pp.22-3,88.)
- 38 Brecht's description, whilst not insubstantial, conveys as much about the evasion of narrative as it does concerning the action on stage.
- 39 Brecht, Stefan. p60.
- 40 Presented by The Performance Group in December 1969. For an account of the staging of this production, see Jerry Rojo's remarks in McNamara, Brooks, Jerry Rojo and Richard Schechner. Theatres, Spaces, Environments. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1975. p104.
- 41 A subsequent production, The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin comprised plays within a play. Acts I to III were a reprise of Wilson's earlier The Life and Times of Sigmund Freud (1969) whilst the central act (of seven) consisted of Deafman Glance. For an account of the productions see Deak, Frantisek. op. cit.
- 42 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. Biographia Literaria. ch 14.

- <sup>43</sup> Unpublished interview by the author with Robert Wilson, 29/10/92
- <sup>44</sup> Teatro Caio Melisso, Spoleto, Italy.
- <sup>45</sup> In Wilson's case, the preservation of work that cannot be honed down to script entails the painstaking documentation, both on paper and recorded onto video, of every element of performance, thus facilitating the two restagings of Einstein on the Beach.
- <sup>46</sup> see Goldberg, Roselee. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present. London: Thames & Hudson, 1988. pp 60-1.
- <sup>47</sup> see Kostelanetz, Richard (ed.) Essaying Essays: Alternative Forms of Exposition. New York: Out of London Press, 1975. for numerous examples of the transparency of the text being rendered suspect by the arrangement of the words on the page
- <sup>48</sup> Kaprow, Allan. "Happenings in the New York Scene." Art News Vol 60 no.3. May 1961. p59.
- <sup>49</sup> Brecht, Stefan. p274 [footnote 15].
- <sup>50</sup> Quoted in Marranca, Bonnie. p55.
- <sup>51</sup> Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984. p23.
- <sup>52</sup> Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- <sup>53</sup> *ibid.* pxxx.
- <sup>54</sup> *ibid.* pp 19-20.
- <sup>55</sup> *ibid.* pxxx.
- <sup>56</sup> "A story that claims the status of universal metanarrative, capable of accounting for all other stories in order to reveal their true meaning." [*ibid.* pxxxiii]
- <sup>57</sup> see Brecht, Stefan. p272 [footnote 17] for the origin of the text
- <sup>58</sup> Quoted in Marranca, Bonnie. pp 67-9
- <sup>59</sup> Barthes, Roland. Image, Music, Text. London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1977. p39.
- <sup>60</sup> As the final element of Act I, the poem does not mark a conclusion or point of closure. Instead, its repetitiveness suggests that the undermining of the text by its re-occurrence has reached a point of crisis; the Act terminates because the text has become so unstable in its self-reflexivity that meaning is no longer possible.
- <sup>61</sup> Jones, Robert. p24
- <sup>62</sup> Founded by Wilson in New York in 1969, the group derived its name from a dance teacher, Mrs Byrd Hoffman, who cured Wilson of a speech impediment in his youth.
- <sup>63</sup> First performed on 8/5/75 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. The production is documented in Aronson, Arnold. "Wilson/Knowles' The \$ value of man." The Drama Review. Vol 19 no 3 [T67]. Fall 1975. pp 106-110.
- <sup>64</sup> Shyer, Laurence. p11.
- <sup>65</sup> *ibid.* p11.
- <sup>66</sup> *ibid.* p14.
- <sup>67</sup> For a discussion of these works see Berger, Maurice. "Chapter 2 Against Repression: Minimalism and Anti-Form" in Berger, Maurice. Labyrinths.

Robert Morris. Minimalism, and the 1960s New York: Harper & Row, 1989. pp.47-80.

68 Whilst the beholder is very often required to determine the nature of a Happening by moving around/within it, the term 'beholder' is problematic in discussing what are often participatory situations nevertheless, experience is predicated on a physical "doing"

69 Reuben Gallery, New York, autumn 1959. See Kirby, Michael Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1965.

70 Simmer, Bill. "Robert Wilson and therapy " The Drama Review Vol 20 no.1 [T69] Winter 1976. p101

71 Lyotard, Jean-François. The Differend Phrases in Dispute trans. G Van den Abbeele. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979. p79. quoted in Readings, Bill. p57. Wilson does not sufficiently elaborate his notion of the interior screen to determine whether he regards it as a reservoir of sense data that has not been analysed by the exterior screen, or whether it has been examined and found to be superfluous to an understanding of the phenomena being sensed which would indicate whether he regards the bracketing-off of material as an inherent characteristic of the addressee or predicated on the circumstances they found themselves in. In this particular instance it would relate to whether the move toward narrative is an inherent characteristic of the beholder or whether it is stimulated by invitations made by the performance itself.

72 This is most evident in accounts of *Einstein on the Beach*, which is overt in its use of structure.

73 First in 1984 and again in 1992

74 In the period 1971-74, Glass was working on *Music in Twelve Parts*, a five and a half hour piece he describes as a kind of catalogue of ideas about rhythmic structure (Glass, Philip. Opera on the Beach London: Faber and Faber, 1987. p38.)

75 The scenes are not repeated, but are linked visually and textually.

76 Baracks, Barbara. "Einstein on the Beach " Artforum. March 1977. p32.

77 Brecht, Stefan. pp.374-5.

78 *ibid.*, pp.320-22.

79 Also, the beam of light coming from the train's headlight describes a triangle across the stage.

80 Glass, Philip. p59.

81 *ibid.*, illustration following p42.

82 Baracks, Barbara. p33.

83 Readings, Bill. pxxx.

84 Calder, Nigel. Einstein's Universe: A Guide to the Theory of Relativity Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982.

85 Shyer, Laurence. pxvii.

86 b. 1879. d. 1955.

87 Owens, Craig. "Einstein on the Beach " p21.

88 see for example Lipman, Samuel. "Einstein's Long March to Brooklyn." The New Criterion. Vol 3 no 6. February 1985. pp.15-24.

## Conclusion

---

The performative does not properly lie "between the arts" as Fried declares of the theatrical, though it may emerge in practices that fall between or call upon several existing disciplines. Aside from the implicit sense that such a position can only define itself in relation to existing forms, Fried's assessment maintains a sense of distinct disciplines, collectively referred to as "the arts". This is manifest in his amplification of the concern that "art degenerates as it approaches the condition of theatre", in which Fried argues that the work of Cage and Rauschenberg strengthens

the illusion that the barriers between the arts are in the process of crumbling [...] and that the arts themselves are at last sliding toward some kind of final, implosive, hugely desirable synthesis.<sup>1</sup>

Arguing within a Modernist paradigm, Fried assigns a teleological drive to that which cannot be contained within its limits. Fried's claim may be justified to a limited degree with respect to the early pronouncements of Kaprow, and is irrefutable when applied to Beuys' conception of art, though the German artist's rejection of the object in favour of the individual as the vessel of art is antithetical to Fried's position. Yet, the work addressed here, though it is considered on the basis of its shared possession of a performative quality, does not look toward a unification of art practices. By disrupting form, rather than rejecting it, the practitioners who are the subject of this study are as far removed from being considered indistinguishable as they are from being placed within pre-existing categories. It is within the occurrence itself that the particular nature of the work is established, and for this to continue to be so, practitioners must generate circumstances that provoke an

## Conclusion

---

The performative does not properly lie "between the arts" as Fried declares of the theatrical, though it may emerge in practices that fall between or call upon several existing disciplines. Aside from the implicit sense that such a position can only define itself in relation to existing forms, Fried's assessment maintains a sense of distinct disciplines, collectively referred to as "the arts". This is manifest in his amplification of the concern that "art degenerates as it approaches the condition of theatre", in which Fried argues that the work of Cage and Rauschenberg strengthens

the illusion that the barriers between the arts are in the process of crumbling [...] and that the arts themselves are at last sliding toward some kind of final, implosive, hugely desirable synthesis.<sup>1</sup>

Arguing within a Modernist paradigm, Fried assigns a teleological drive to that which cannot be contained within its limits. Fried's claim may be justified to a limited degree with respect to the early pronouncements of Kaprow, and is irrefutable when applied to Beuys' conception of art, though the German artist's rejection of the object in favour of the individual as the vessel of art is antithetical to Fried's position. Yet, the work addressed here, though it is considered on the basis of its shared possession of a performative quality, does not look toward a unification of art practices. By disrupting form, rather than rejecting it, the practitioners who are the subject of this study are as far removed from being considered indistinguishable as they are from being placed within pre-existing categories. It is within the occurrence itself that the particular nature of the work is established, and for this to continue to be so, practitioners must generate circumstances that provoke an



engagement with the beholder rather than affirm the persistence of values derived from a previous encounter.

The rapid emergence of a plethora of styles from 1960 onwards is partly the consequence of the increasing freedom to suit the form to the idea rather than the reverse and partly a recognition that the performative quality that distinguishes the work is of a different perceptual order to that which remains, subsequent to the encounter with the beholder. This latter point can be seen to inform Morris' use of indeterminate materials that can only be fixed at the moment of experiencing them, the distinction between the engaged, localised understanding of Kaprow's Happenings from the participant's perspective and the dispassionate overview to be gleaned from their scores, and Beuys' continual alteration of his objects, both literally and through modifying the larger conceptual frame within which he situates them. Burden, too, displays a resistance to the regarding of the occurrence and that which survives it as synonymous, though often this provides the impetus for his practice, employing documentation in lieu of the event. In the work of Robert Wilson, the manipulation of form proceeds in a manner no different from the way in which subject matter is ordered to the extent that frames one might subsequently employ to contain the work are frequently situated within its bounds; consequently, their authority in speaking of the work is severely curtailed.

Though the comments contained in the preceding chapters range over a number of disciplines and on occasion look toward engaging with discourses beyond the arts, they are contingent upon a perspective situated within theatre. The performative qualities of the work are enunciated firstly with respect to the practices of artists using insentient physical objects. Though the work is in possession of qualities one might more usually associate with theatre, these are distinct from those of the

object, which ceases to be the sole determinant of the work. It is the beholder's engagement, having to make choices, positioning herself, both physically and conceptually, in relation to the object that establishes a sense of encounter. It is analogous to the encounter between characters on a stage, which, if it is to be sustained, requires a sense of disequilibrium. Within the drama this embraces a wealth of situations, from the non-particular, such as the exchanging of information, to the specific, such as the redressing of an injustice. Because theatre prescribes such encounters, positioning them within a narrative frame, their disruptive quality is regarded as content, to be assimilated by the beholder. In contrast, when the object itself disrupts such a frame, this disequilibrium is evident in the relationship between beholder and object. The work then must be considered not as that which is placed before the beholder but that which occurs between the material provided by the artist and the beholder. As the nature of the work under consideration here moves closer to the formal properties of theatre through the succeeding chapters, first in possession of performers, then a narrative thread and, ultimately, in the productions of Wilson, epitomising nineteenth-century illusionistic staging, the argument for the performative work being distinct from that consisting of the autonomous object is developed to the point where performance (pertaining to the nature of the object) and the performative (a means of engaging with the object) are both present within the work yet quite separate qualities.

Insofar as the performative arises from a disruption of form, it cannot be said to owe allegiance to any one discipline. Though the preceding chapters make reference to "roles" and "performing", these are to be understood not in terms of fixed patterns of behaviour and special abilities directed toward the re-enactment of a text or score for the benefit of others but as positions and ways of intervening that

cannot be known prior to their coming into being. The performative does not attempt to contain and limit the infinitely diverse experiences and sensations that inform the art work by declaring that they obey the dictates of a particular form but, instead, takes such variability as its model. Hence the formal diversity of the work addressed here and the shift from a position that is predicated on catching, holding and possessing indefinitely some insight, image, or action, to one that derives satisfaction from chasing the elusive wherever it may lead. The chaser might then come to see herself in possession of the freedom and sublime qualities she had so recently wished to entrap and confine.

Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood " Artforum. Vol.5 no 10. June 1967. pp 12-23. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed ) Minimal Art. New York: E P Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968 pp 141-42.

4/11/92 at Robert Morris' loft, New York

[the first part of the interview exists only as rough notes due to a malfunction with the recorder which miraculously started working approximately five minutes in. RM has just been asked the following question which he is part way through answering]

TW: The works seem to deny a structural logic emanating from their centre, and where the centre is visible it is invariably empty. Was this a conscious decision?

RM: ...so as I was saying, there was sometimes less structured work. You can have say a square floor plan and a circular cross- section, or vice-versa, so a lot of that kind of thing happened to the work without being conscious of it.

TW: OK. Clement Greenberg talks of Minimalism committing itself to the third dimension, rather than the frontality of two-dimensional sculpture that is given as a visual image to the viewer, and Michael Fried suggests that your work moves from the condition of painting to one that embraces the fourth dimension, a sense of time. How important do you consider space and time to the reception of your work?

RM: Well, I think it's central to how the work is experienced. The fact that you can experience it must be because it uses space and time, so the whole idea of reducing work - Greenberg's idea of the media - works [hunting?] themselves, apart from [...] some arbitrary definition of flatness or space or time, I think that's all very politicised and very formal. I mean you can go back to Lessing and Burke and find those

same kind of arguments, but to me it's political argument. You experience things in space and time and that's it.

TW: Do you think, arising out of that, that as the content diminishes so the need for input from the viewer arises? Is there a direct relationship that emerges?

RM: Well, I wouldn't call it content, but I think there's something called...well, what you might describe as some kind of 'visual incident' or 'eternal illusion of parts' which I more or less eliminated, rather than in inverse proportion to something else. Rosenberg said it was inverse to talking - the less there was there the more you had to talk about. I don't know...They say the work was doing something else and getting rid of those kind of internal divisions was, partly, for me, very programmatic. That was because other things could become focussed on. Whether that increases the time aspect, I'm rather doubtful, I think it had to do with how the work was distributed in space, the scale and the weight...

TW: There is a sense that the art experience remains constant and the input from one party or the other - the object or the subject - manoeuvres around that - you always get a constant which is the art experience and whether your input is greater or lesser is compensated for by the input of the spectator. Would you agree with that?

RM: I think that art is always involved in some kind of relationship. You have a subject, you have an object and you've got an 'other' and I think it's a triangle. Art's social, and very quickly language gets involved and so maybe some art increases some of those things more than others, but I really think that you can't have one without the other. I don't know if that answers your question.

TW: How important to you are the circumstances of the work's placement - the space it's found in, and the available light?

RM: They're always important. How a thing's disposed in space is important, and for my work - the grey pieces I'm talking about, the plywood pieces - the light is important too, in the sense that they were painted light gray. I usually lit them pretty brightly so that you have...it works against the volume of it somehow. But I don't think you can take the thing without its space. I think a work is impossible to experience without its context. It just delivers both the context and the object, it seems to me, that's the nature of it.

TW: Would you agree with Suzanne Langer who talks about a sculpture 'commanding' the space around it? Do you think your works exhibit that feature?

RM: Well yes. I wanted it to do that. I wanted it to have a scale that confronted that of the body, not one that was overpowering or one....there was a certain scale in those particular works that I was always concerned to work with and that was one that was very relative to the human body and one that was not intimidating or one that could not really be somehow put outside of one's space as an intimate object but was something that was coexistent with your space - as a figure, as a person, as an object, as a human being of a certain scale and so on.

TW: One thing that occurs to me - you talk of painting them [the plywood pieces] light grey and then illuminating them quite powerfully. Was that decided because, looking at this room, for example, it's obviously painted a light colour to enhance the value of space, to create a sense of more space than is actually there and a dark room would have the

opposite effect. Was a light grey chosen perhaps to centre the viewer on the actual scale of the piece rather than try and manipulate..

RM: No, I think it was a play against the volume and the bulk, and then you light it and paint it in that situation and it tends to work against that; one aspect's pushing against another.

TW: The four mirrored cubes suggest that rather than commanding the surrounding space, the work is determined by it. It seems both literally and experientially reflexive, almost denying its existence other than supplemental to the circumstances - the space in which it is found and the viewer who sees it. Was your concern with the mirror works to explore further the relation between the object and its circumstances, or had you other concerns?

RM: Well, I remember wanting to have another surface, and that was what motivated me or pushed me to find something like that and I think it is more obviously reflexive. Mirrors appeared before in the work and they went on to be important in the work. It's really hard to answer that except by saying that I was searching for another surface.

TW: By 'another surface' are you talking about something different or in addition to..

RM: Something different than the opaque painted surface, or the surface of plain wood or whatever I'd used before - steel, wood, painted wood, natural wood, aluminium - those were the surfaces I'd used and I wanted something different.

TW: What determines your choice of materials?



RM: Well, in the beginning I think that I wanted to use plywood. It was a very common material, it was something I could afford, something I could use. It was always important to me to make the work myself. The plywood, and any of the pieces are dependent on, and generated by plywood panels of a certain standard size. It structured the making of the work, so in that sense the material played a co-operative role.

TW: Obviously when you were first creating these works the cost of the materials was more relevant than as you progressed. Did you find that you could use more diverse materials, or, once you had established working with these fairly basic materials did you wish to continue in that vein?

RM: Well, I suppose I got intrigued with working with other materials, explored other kinds of materials, but...what was your question again - why did I change?

TW: No,...when the circumstances that determined you use basic, easily available materials changed because you had the opportunity to use more elaborate, perhaps more traditional artists' materials did you feel that you wanted to do that or that you wanted to continue using these basic materials?

RM: I think that I'd always used a lot of different kinds of materials, but at the same time as making these plywood minimal things I was making lead reliefs, I was working in the theatre, I was making things out of grease and earth. And then I turned to felt, I used mirrors, I used steam...It was the material that...if I could get into a relationship with the material that would co-operate with me in exploring something else I'd use it. I didn't feel attached to steel or bronze or anything else. It was totally irrelevant to me.

TW: There's no sense of them being elemental...

RM: No, no, none whatsoever.

TW: You've said that you disagree with the polarisation of object and environment - I think in relation to something Kaprow said - that you didn't wish your pieces to be seen either as object or environment. Do you think the work is more useful if it explores the interplay between these two conditions?

RM: I think that I often would install pieces in that kind of in- between sort of situation. For me I think the work delivers the context of the space too. I don't think you can take one without the other. I said once that they were objects but they're maybe less self-important objects and I think that says it another way.

TW: Coming back to something you've already alluded to - the use of human scale - it seems not only to inhibit an appraisal predicated on enormity or diminution but would seem to offer the beholder an initial point of reference through which they can determine their own displacement in space. Do you think that, rather than giving autonomy to either object or viewer you set up a situation in which both are defined in the act of coming into contact with each other?

RM: I don't know about 'definition' but I think certainly there is a kind of increased awareness to that aspect of things. It's always important for me - in those particular pieces we are talking about, the grey, minimal pieces - that that relationship between a body - its possibility of movement, where the eyes generally are - the level of vision - all of those things are calculated in relationship to the work and it's part of what the work is about in some sense.

TW: The three 'L' beams - they're actually untitled - they're very particularly sited. Can you suggest why you repeated the component three times and placed them on differing planes?

RM: It wasn't the first piece I did that permuted itself: there were other pieces that permuted themselves, and if you want to think of sets as a form of permutation, then I guess you can. If you want to map cross-sections of the floor plans - which is what I did - it's related to permutation. I remember I showed some wedges once that had round and square corners and they were changed every other day in a show so permutation was part of the work then. Maybe the 'L's were before that - I can't now remember but I think there were originally either nine or eleven 'L's that I had set out to do because at that time I was thinking about their different relationship to the room - against the wall, in a corner etc - and then somehow I didn't make them all. I ended up making those that would just be free-standing and that turned out to be where I left them.

TW: They seem very particularly placed in that from a particular standpoint you can see all the variations of placement of the single component which sets up a dialogue between the individual and the piece. You cannot know the piece in its totality without walking round it; it seems almost conceptual - the relationship between the whole piece and the individual components. Was that something you thought at the time?

RM: I think that there's interaction between some sort of a priori conception of the thing and the experience you have to get around it, whatever is there, and in other pieces too. So I think it's true of that piece, but others like the slab it's not.

TW: You've also exhibited this piece as two units, and outside. Did that change for you the idea of the work, or what the work was about or your conception of it?

RM: I had only two in the beginning because simply laziness. I just didn't get around to making three and then they were in a show as two and they got bought - somebody wanted to make them in metal and put them outside. That was a function of the market, it wasn't really my idea. I finally did get around to making a third. It's OK putting them outside, making them of metal but my preference for those pieces is their plywood form. There really is no original they are just reproductions, they can be remade another time, but it doesn't always remain that way. The felt pieces, for example, I'd always thought of as having variable sorts of positions - on the floor, on the wall, whatever - but once they get out into the world - somebody owns it, then it freezes it into that sort of stage. It's just the nature of how objects are sold and dealt with. It's not necessarily what I intended.

TW: You have said that you were interested in the possibilities of siting pieces in the woods - outside environments. What interested you about that?

RM: I was less interested in taking the pieces outside than I was in working outside - in a larger scale - in the beginning moving dirt around and having a notion of distance. I've just finished a piece at Pittsburgh in the airport there, which is about eight-hundred feet long and it has five courtyards that are about fifty by a hundred and forty with river-stones in them and then the steam comes up. It's a big opening, so you see this thing at a distance. Seeing things at a distance is very different from what we see when we are experiencing things - that possibility of travel, of the body moving so far. I went to Peru because

it's interested in that sightline effect. I was interested in the change of scale; what it does to vision, what it does for the body when you're outside, much more than I was in simply plonking things outside. The 'L's got put outside but I wasn't especially interested in that, but I was interested in the observing outside, working with that kind of scale.

TW: What's interesting in what you've just said is that you weren't interested so much in siting them outside as working outside which suggests that your relationship to the work is engendered during the period of making rather than deriving some response from the finished article...

RM: I think the making of the piece is always extremely important to that's the question you're asking?

TW: Well, that leads on to something I was going to ask you about the felt pieces because they exhibit the sense of you making decisions which take one back to the moment of its inception. There's almost a delayed dialogue between the viewer and yourself because the viewer is not so much trying to second-guess your intention, but why you stopped at that particular moment. There seems a correlation between Pollock's 'action painting' as an event or rather the record of an event...

RM: Exactly. Which is there in 'The Box with the sound of its own making'.

TW: In 1968 you produced a work comprising nine open aluminium boxes which called attention to notions of ordering or placement or individual elements with respect to others or repetition. Do you think this marked a shift from an experiential to a conceptual understanding of your work?

RM: Well, I'm not sure. I find those pieces distributed on a grid much less interesting than the others. As I think back about them I think that they were to me less interesting. They don't have the interest of something like the 'L' pieces that have a kind of relationship to how they really exist in the space, because they are the three ways they can go in the space. They don't resort to some preconceived notion of a grid. I just don't find those pieces so interesting any more.

TW: They seem to share a lot with what Sol LeWitt was doing...

RM: Yes, or Agnes Martin, or anybody who's dealing with a grid. For me, those pieces weren't that interesting..

TW: Because there's a structure external to the work that's being imposed?

RM: Right. Could I say one other thing in relation to that. I wouldn't apply that to the mirrored cubes. Those four pieces closed themselves out. For me that's different from those pieces that repeated themselves nine, twelve, sixteen times. Those are the ones that I'm talking about that seem to be more an a priori imposition of...composition, you might call it.

TW: They form an enclosure.

RM: Right. They relate to the empty centre pieces.

TW: Another piece that you did of this nature, although it sets up more of an interplay between the individual unit and the composite structure, is the piece with five girders lying on top of five girders set at a right angle. The size of the pieces was such that it was difficult to ignore them

as individual units and I felt it was perhaps more successful than the nine open boxes..

RM: Yes, I think so too, but I don't know what to say about those pieces.

TW: In the felt pieces you further call attention to the work's existence in the same situation as that of the beholder by introducing the idea of gravity. At what point did you intervene or cease involvement in the finished form?

RM: I think as I said before, in a lot of cases there was no finished form. There was a series [...] that related to some of the minimal pieces that permuted - they didn't have a final configuration. Some of them, like the wedges, had a series of possible positions, always with the centre open. If you wanted to line them up then you get into another whole set, but I restricted it to a certain set of possibilities. The felt pieces were the same way. In the beginning all of them had at least one or two positions - on the wall and on the floor - but that gets washed out; you just can't curate the work the work for the rest of your life. It changes, it gets set, it gets photographed, and...its the nature of how objects are dealt with; those kinds of parameters disappear.

TW: So, in those pieces, you're very consciously shifting the artist's concern with the finished product - it's very Duchamp-like in the sense that you're not concerning yourself with the finished form so much as the conception of the piece..

RM: Well, I don't want to reduce it to the idea of the piece as a conceptual piece because I think the physical manifestation is very important. But some of the pieces...one I remember was made by a kind of geometric progression of cuts, and then it's all heaped on the floor,

The structure goes away right away, and then every time it's put it's put up differently, so it really is indeterminate in a way. You could heap it in a corner, you could heap it against the wall, you could lay it all out on the floor - there are all those possibilities and it is different each time. Now some of the others, say that don't involve all those individual parts, they get a kind of set image - the image determines the object because of a photograph somebody took. So, some are more resistant to that image, maybe, than others, but there is a range and I think that was one of the concerns of the felt pieces, this variation, this change, this kind of indeterminacy that's possible, even though today it doesn't exist.

TW: The felt piece in the Castelli [Leo Castelli Gallery had just finished a show of Morris, Judd and Flavin's work] I felt referred perhaps more to the act of cutting than exhibiting a final image...

RM: Yes. There were some done like that too. The felt pieces went through a lot of ways, or methods, or images, whatever, but yes there were some that you just cut and it folds in a certain way so I said alright. But I did a whole series of those. In some cases rather than saying this thing can fold in half a dozen different ways I made half a dozen different pieces.

TW: By working in felt in that particular way you seemed to call attention to the fact that form isn't final and determined but is subject to the very things that we are subject to - chance and indeterminacy..

RM: Right. And another thing that happened in the felt; at a certain point I invented a tool that would put grommets into the felt and that opened up another range of how they could be hung on the wall. That changed them a lot. The ones with the grommets can't hang in ways that the



others that didn't have those reinforced holes can exist. And then I made another kind of hanging bracket later so that changed it too.

TW: Presumably before that you had to rely on the bulk of it..

RM: Yes, just on a nail somewhere, if I used a nail, or on the floor.

TW: And then it was subject to the pressure of the hanging mass.

RM: Both of them are, I'm just saying that when you have those kinds of reinforced holes you can get a tension and a pull on the piece that was not possible just by nailing it to the wall.

TW: Fried's comment about your work approaching the condition of theatre raises the question of whether you consider there is a performative element in your sculpture and if so, whether there is a distinction, other than on formal grounds, between this and your overtly performative pieces, such as Site and Waterman Switch ?

RM: I don't think that there is that kind of convergence between theatre pieces and those pieces, but what he calls theatricality, in a pejorative way about the work, is something that I would probably valorize. I don't share the notion that because you're moving around in this piece and so on, that it doesn't keep its distance from you and all the kinds of things he's talking about. I don't agree with that, its the wrong value. I don't think those pieces necessarily relate to the theatre pieces because in the theatre pieces you're in a more pictorial relationship to them than with the objects because you're outside of this thing totally; you're still, you're watching. In the objects you're in it, you're moving around, it doesn't keep its distance from you so it's almost strangely enough reversed; the 'theatre' pieces are more pictorial in his sense.

TW: When he talks about theatre he is perhaps looking forward to a notion of theatre that didn't really gain currency until people worked more in 'performance' - the idea of being conscious of oneself in performance - rather than the theatre of the time when he writes that seems largely divided by an active/passive situation which is certainly not the relationship set up by your work.

RM: Yes.

TW: What relationship did you have with Beuys? You obviously both worked in felt and you did a piece together - Chief Fluxus Song ?

RM: We were supposed to have done a piece together because I met Beuys when I went to Dusseldorf in '64 and I got to know him. I never saw his performances and I never really saw much of his work but he said he wanted to do this piece, The Chief , and he wanted to do it in two parts of the world. I was going to do it at the Judson Church and he was going to do it in Dusseldorf, on a certain day at a certain time. He gave me the instructions but I couldn't get the space so it wasn't done. So, unfortunately, he did his, but I didn't do a version here. I found him a very interesting person. I still like his work a lot. I don't think that what I did in using felt really had very much relationship to the kind of iconography he's reading into his uses of it, the mythological elements.

TW: He comes across a lot more forcibly as an individual, as a performer even in his object work that perhaps you would wish to or have chosen to

RM: I think a lot of his objects were actually used in performances and then exhibited as objects. An enormous amount first appeared in his performances, so he told me and I just take that to be true. I don't know

if it is or not, but he used these objects as props, more or less and then they appeared in a museum, but I don't know if it's true or not.

TW: In Maurice Berger's book you talk about a time when you became disillusioned with objects and you did a lot more performative work. How has that resolved itself - how do you feel about the relationship between the two types of work?

RM: Now or then?

TW: From that point on.

RM: I think things continue to change and there were certain things that got worked out in performance that I didn't feel necessary to go on with. The same thing happened in objects; I just moved into different things. Maybe I wrote more rather than performed more, it's hard to say. There was some sense maybe of a dissatisfaction at times with object-making. Maybe that still occurs. Then there's writing, there's other things that I do.

TW: OK. Thank you.

29/10/92 Alley Theatre, Houston, Texas

TW: I want to ask you questions mainly concerning four works, Deafman, Queen Victoria, Einstein and the current production [Danton's Death]....

RW: OK

TW: Back in the sixties when you were in New York at the Pratt Institute, were there any particular activities or movements that particularly influenced your later work?

RW: Well, one of the biggest influences on my work was seeing the work of George Ballanchine, who was a choreographer, and then later seeing Merce Cunningham and John Cage. I think reading Cage's book, Silence, was a big influence and I also liked very much the paintings of Cezanne and still do. I still think about it - those paintings - and still look to see Merce's work, Cage and Ballanchine. And I think the reason I was attracted to them and that they still hold up is that they were classical constructions, classical compositions. They will always be interesting.

TW: OK, so they weren't works specifically of the sixties, or were generated, in Cage's case slightly before that time; there was nothing say that was being created at the time that you had an interest in?

RW: Well, I went to Andy Warhol's studio and saw him making a film and he was on the floor painting someone who was behind the camera. I didn't know what to make of it - I had just come to New York, and I thought a lot about, and Andy's films - Chelsea Girls - were very important. I saw the work of Jack Smith, an underground filmmaker, and

Jack worked with me in some of my early plays, the first plays. He was very important. And then of my contemporaries, I saw the work of Kenneth King, who was a dancer - we were friends and I performed in some of his pieces and he was in mine and I liked his very eccentric style, it was very personal. And also Meredith Monk to some extent. I had my own aesthetic but we were working in a similar school and someone whose work I liked even more than that was Yvonne Rainer. She did a piece called *The Mind is a Muscle* and that was probably the most impressive of the people closest to my generation.

TW: You've been described as 'Minimalist', though the scale of some of your works are in contrast with the notions of reduction of content and purity of form that many people would equate with the term. Do you think there is a Minimalist aesthetic running through your work, or has been at any point. I was thinking of Yvonne Rainer's work with Robert Morris...

RW: Well, I think there's a side to me that's always liked things very simple, whether it's a chair, or a building - this poster here, from an exhibition, a retrospective in Valencia - I don't see that it's something that's contemporary - I always liked Marlene Dietrich because she didn't move around a lot - just stood there - after three songs one movement of an arm. You never thought, 'well the lady didn't move her arms', the movement was inside her. I liked Jack Benny, this American comedian, who just did nothing, I mean almost nothing, you'd have one gesture and then he didn't make a move, a sound. I don't know, it's just...

TW: I'm thinking perhaps more of the sense that the form of the object or the production is established but the content is not verifiable - you cannot say what it is, but you have to acknowledge that it is there.

RW: Susan Sontag says in her essay *Against Interpretation* "the mystery is in the surface" and I think the surface has to be accessible, has to be simple. Theatre has to be about one thing first and then it can be about many things and so often it's too complicated. I think that's what's interesting about Warhol, that the surface is very simple. You see a portrait of Marilyn Monroe five hundred years from now it's going to be still interesting, it's a classic. Like *Chelsea Girls*, with Nico for forty-five minutes on the screen. Its going to be, a hundred years from now, still interesting to see that woman. In our subconscious mind we all know her, we can identify her. She's a myth, she's a goddess. Marilyn Monroe's a goddess, whether you're in Africa or Japan or wherever, somehow we know who this woman is. So, I think if you're doing *King Lear* you've got to tell yourself a very simple story. It's a great play because it's a very simple story, you can tell the story in one minute, you can tell the story of *Medea* in one minute. So, [Wolloner's???] a foreigner who meets a man and falls in love and they get married and they have two kids and he falls in love with a young girl and she kills the two kids and flies away. And then it can be very complex, because we still go back to this woman *Medea* we can maybe still identify with, someone who murdered her children. It's a very complex story, but the surface is very simple.

TW: Do you think that simplicity then allows you to fill the space a more complex structure would otherwise take up?

RW: Exactly. Once you've got your headlight, the big thing, then it can be about a million things, but it can't be about a million things until you have one thing. If you don't know where you're going - I was with Rudolph Nureyev and Margot Fonteyn once in London just after they had performed *Sleeping Beauty*. They had just started dancing together and they were sensational - the greatest thing ever - and Fonteyn said to

Nureyev "if you partner me this way ever again.." and he says "what do you mean?". She says "I'm forty-seven years old. I'm not twenty-three like you are. I can't jump for the whole evening. I've done a full-length ballet. I can jump here, there, and that's it and the first time I'm going to try to have my energy together for ten seconds. Second time I'm going to try to have it for fifteen, and the last is another ten. I have got to save my energy to get there and you have to help me, my partner, to get to those points". Now that's a classical performer - she knows how to build her energy, she knows where she's going, how to get to a point and get out of it, and you're drawing a line always in the theatre, one line that's a continuous line, and you can't draw that line not unless you, I think, not unless you know where you're going. You can do King Lear as mad and crazy at the beginning, remember when he says "I shall go mad", you can do that totally sane and he can end up crazy at the end or end up wise at the end, you know. Or you can do it the opposite. It doesn't matter; your decision what to do is not so important so long as you have an idea about where you're going, and then you can forget it. But first you've got to plant a direction, something that's simple - I think it's technique - and then you can become free, but you can't become free without it.

TW: You work from drawings and sketches which favour two dimensional movement - stage left-stage right - and it also gives you a depth of field so that the object remains a constant size - there's not a shifting perspective - and this seems emphasized by the banding that you've used in several productions where you've divided the stage from upstage to downstage. When you use diagonal movement, does this mark a point of resistance to the images? Is it the point at which the stage image and your original image come into conflict?

RW: Well, first, a drawing is a drawing and although it can indicate a stage space it never is a stage space, but I know what you're talking about. I've worked in all different kinds of spaces - I've worked in the round, I've worked outdoors, I've worked in traditional proscenium theatres. I prefer the traditional proscenium theatres because I like the two-dimensionality. I like the fact that one side is hidden, one side is revealed. I like that flat two-dimensional space, and that is not twentieth-century. Twentieth-century is Robert Rauschenberg painting a goat, putting it in the middle of the room saying its sculpture. And you can see it from all sides. What else? Paintings of all sorts. Merce Cunningham - his choreography for a large part was made for a space that was three hundred and sixty degrees - you can see the dancer from any side. I preferred Ballanchine, which was more nineteenth century, a very formal way of presenting; the dancer out front and [??] side and back. Of course there's no hidden side and back. I also like the parallelism to the edge of the stage and the layering of ideas and thoughts and this flat space and often that is broken up or destroyed and the counterpoint to it is the diagonal line [??] three hundred and sixty degree space. [??] contradiction. So at the same time you're dealing with two dimensional space and the reality [??] of this flatness and a hidden side. It's also interesting that in the middle of that you put something that is orientated to three hundred and sixty degrees or has a diagonal line that goes through it. You need the counterpoints in order to get a tension in the space.

TW: You make the distinction between "speeded-up" time and the "natural" time that you employ, giving the audience "time and space in which to think". This "natural time", say for example in the opening of *Deafman Glance*, seems to invite the co-existence of the fixed image and the passage of time. Time doesn't seem subservient so much as almost being quoted, as if you're creating a representation of time. Do



you think your works have achieved that? Have you wished to divorce time from narrative?

RW: Time is space, and time can't exist without space. There's always a balance between time and space; a certain tension exists between these two realities. Space for me is a horizontal line, something that is here, and time is something that is vertical [...] and when they cross at the centre here, it's cosmic. And this awareness of this cross can be more tense, less tense and that effects, ultimately either time or space, depending on the tension between the two forces.

TW: So your work would operate on the principle of drawing attention to that tension?

RW: Yes, and I think you can say that Mozart, without doubt, works. I mean if you're just playing it's one thing, or if you're just walking on the stage, like that [demonstrates] that's one thing, or if I move my hand like this , or if I move it like this , that's the difference - weight of movement. Here the movement is more interior, there's more tension, between this foot on this floor, this...

TW: There you're showing a consciousness of time. You're saying that I am aware that I'm moving in time and I'm manipulating it...

RW: I don't think it's a...yes, it's consciousness of it, but its not something intellectual. It's something that's felt, rather than understood.

TW: There seems a disjunction in Deafman Glance between the time needed to play out the scene - the narrative duration - and the time which you actually take to stage that.

RW: Right. Exactly.

TW: Coming to the idea of a painterly aesthetic in your work. Although people try and draw the arts together in a general aesthetic theory, the Modern art idea of each art discipline being autonomous, of drawing attention to the characteristics inherent in itself - the Abstract Expressionists drawing attention to the canvas - leads Michael Fried to talk about the "theatre" of Robert Morris' sculptures - they don't have a "presentness and instantaneousness" that he sees as characteristic of all painting. Conversely your work seems to be demonstrating this "presentness and instantaneousness", an idea of the continuous present..

RW: I think so.

TW: Do you find that you're consciously addressing more than one mode of representation? Do you find that you're shifting from theatre to painting, or literature? Do you engage in shifting the values by which people regard the work?

RW: Well, I think it's very difficult to hear and see simultaneously. I think we either do one or the other and for the most part they say people are visually more aware than audibly, and it's very strange that in our theatre there's mostly talk about us being simply audial - the text: I mean in our Western theatre, European and North American theatre. I've just come from Japan where we see the oriental theatre, at Christmas I was in Bali. I met a girl who was thirteen years old. She said she had over three hundred separate defined ways of moving her eyes - she had been trained as a child. These people built a theatrical language in terms of a visual book that's studied, that's learnt. If you see a Noh actor, he learns, aged three, how to move a hand and you can't expect to really

accomplish it ever in your lifetime. Maybe when you're sixty- five or seventy-five you know something more about it than you did when you were three, but you're not expected to fully understand it 'till you're older. It's just a completely different way of thinking about it. And I think as I get older, that hopefully the audial and visual books - the language, the vocabulary - are expanding, are changing. In the beginning I was more concerned with the visual, but it wasn't that I was not concerned with the audial. The French called them [the early works] 'silent operas', and they were really structured silences. I think you have to start with zero. John Cage said 'there's no such thing as silence, there's always sound', so if you start with just the sound of that air conditioning, the sound in the air, the sound of your pen in your finger, your heartbeat, and if you then start to speak, or you start to play the piano, or if you start to sing, it's only a continuation of this thing that's already established. That's what keeps the continuous line. Then if we think that there's no such thing as no movement, that I'm always moving. Sometimes when we're very still we're more aware of movement, so that when I start to move my finger it only continues what's already there. But if I'm not aware of this movement that's already within me to begin with, or this sound that's already within me - my heartbeat - then the line's broken, because then you have to begin something. You don't have to begin anything - it's already there. Socrates says a baby is born knowing everything, it's just the uncovering of it always one, one line.

TW: Yes. I was thinking of the way that you use text in Queen Victoria - it shifts from being noise, to dialogue, to an object almost when you repeat it - it becomes a block, a motif, that comes back again.

RW: Well, the first texts were more like [???]. Some of my earlier texts were nonsense, words of nonsense. They words like the weather, like atmosphere, and you had to speak them - it was very difficult to do - you

had to speak them with a certain transparency, because when people hear the text they immediately try to have meaning, to attach meaning to it. So you want to say "there's no meaning here, this is nonsense what I'm saying". There is another intelligence, another sense about it but it is not intellectual, it doesn't tell a story.

TW: And also there's a sense of "no meaning", that

[RW called to the stage - interview halted]

TW: Stefan Brecht talks about Deafman Glance being both imagery and performance but performers creating images, ie performance only supplementally - almost as if by accident. They need to create the images and therefore they are performing in order to do that...

RW: I don't agree with that.

TW: OK. I was going to ask you whether you think it's possible in making the performance "mechanical" that you submerge the performative, and if so what remains?

RW: Not at all. No. It's ridiculous. It's always performing. It's not in this Broadway, naturalistic style - like you have in England with all that naturalism. It's just another way of performing.

TW: So you don't think at any point, when you talk about becoming mechanical - so you have the freedom to engage - you don't think that denies performance, it just changes the way...

RW: Not at all. [...]

TW: But does it remove a sense of self-consciousness?

RW: Self-consciousness is always there. If you're performing you're always aware you're performing. That's why naturalism is a lie, because you think 'I act natural' when it's not. It's more natural to say it's artificial and then you perform, because then it's not a lie, then it's more of the truth. The lie is that you think you're acting natural; you're not, it's something artificial. The way you walk on the stage is not the way you walk on the street, even if you try to walk on the stage the way you walk on the street you don't because you're on the stage; it's something artificial. So it's better to be honest, I think, and say this is something artificial, than to try and say it is something natural, and then it'll look more natural.

TW: Your work doesn't engage with the notion of, say, Happenings, where they try and bridge that gap, where they may present something in semi-formal terms and say that this isn't artificial..

RW: Can you say that again?

TW: Your work steers clear of trying to bridge a gap between the artificial and the unmediated here and now. You don't try and resolve the distinction between the two.

RW: I'm not sure I understand what you're saying. To me it's all artificial. The more mechanical it is the freer it is.

TW: So, accepting that the frame is there, you cannot try and disrupt it from within that frame? If you're working within a frame you cannot then say it's not there..

RW: No. It's there.

TW: OK. Structurally, in *Einstein on the Beach*, it seems a three part structure, but underlining it is a very rigid four-part structure. Something I felt in looking at the work was the notion of three dimensions. In the initial scene you have the height of the tower, the width of the train coming across and you have depth provided by Lucinda Childs pacing the diagonal. It seems, coupled with Phillip Glass' music, which in that section is a four against three rhythm, to tie in with ideas in your own work...

RW: Also you have three themes that reoccur three times and it takes four parts to do it. Which are all the possibilities you can have with those three themes, the way they can be put together. There is no other..

TW: Yes. It seems to tie in with the protagonist as well. Is that a conscious decision - the idea of Einstein reaching toward a fourth dimension? Was that something that was consciously..

RW: No, it was not conscious, but Ezra Pound said that "the fourth dimension is stillness and the power over the wild beast".

TW: Have you altered *Einstein* for the current production?

RW: No. Minor adjustments. It's basically the same. TW: You're working now with other people's texts; more so than before. Is this a deliberate move away from your own work? Does it confine or redefine your working method?

RW: Well, if one directs a play of Heiner Muller, one makes different choices than if one is working with a text or with the music of Phillip

Glass, or the music of David Byrne. The work is different. And I think that's what's exciting - working with many different people. I've worked with Laurie Anderson, David Byrne, Louis Andreissen from Holland, Giacomo Manzoni from Italy, from your country Gavin Bryars, Tom Waits, Phillip Glass. I've worked with many different composers, different styles, different aesthetics and the works of contemporary [...], artists - and I think that's what's exciting for me, changing who you work with. Different personalities; its a collaboration, so I [...] what I do, I just do.

TW: What criteria do you apply in choosing your texts?

RW: Well,... what should set personality, what is the counterpoint to that personality. You know, doing Danton's Death , a famous German Classical play in Houston, Texas; I did Gertrude Stein's Doctor Faustus Lights the Light , an American author with an American director in East Berlin, and I think that probably is what theatre does; it's a form where different aesthetics and voices can be heard and what's interesting is that different cultures and aesthetics are introduced to one another and it brings people together. It means that there are opera singers taking influences from African culture, or from Eastern culture, or whatever. So that's also part of the decision you make sometimes; what compliments an author or work and is also possible as a counterpoint. When I was making the CIVIL warS it was full of those kind of contradictions, the mixing up of cultures - working with the Japanese choreographer with Americans, working with Hideo Kanze, who's the oldest member of the Kanze family. The Kanze family's the oldest family teaching the Noh - it's five hundred years old. He was playing Robert E. Lee. He did the death of Robert E. Lee like a samurai; it was a mixing of all these things.

TW: So it's the relationships as much as the texts themselves?

RW: Yes.

TW: Danton's Death seems to highlight the limitations of a narrative in opening up a space for intervention. It highlights the closure of narrative; it cannot exceed or comment on the issues it addresses because it is bound by its representational structure to the very conditions that created it. We cannot know it other than the way in which representation will show it to us. It seems that many times you acknowledge that - the figure with the gagged mouth, for example and the discussion with Tom Paine in prison that is almost quoting eternal values. Do you find that you want to say something about the events that occur - what actually happens - or do wish to draw attention to its status as an event?

RW: I think the latter.

TW: Do you think the text, in being very distanced - it's almost a Greek text in that nothing happens on stage - allows you to...

[end of side of tape: the remainder of the question is approximately "allows you greater opportunity to create a visual score?". When the tape begins again Wilson is part way through answering this question]

RW: ...respect you have to pay the author and the text. You have to always be humble in front of a master. There's a danger of being a slave to him, but you have to be humble. I think in this case it's a very powerful text, a very powerful play and it would be silly to put a lot of decoration on it. It's awful when they've done that, like Les Mis [ Les Miserables ] or something. And it can be done that way - it can be done in any way, but I think it's very pure - these big blocks [as seen in the final execution scenes] are like Donald Judd's sculptures, massive



blocks. It looks silly if you paint decoration on it. So, the set for me is very architectural - the black and white curtains that open and close the space, the many variations where the space is deeper or shallower or higher or lower or something quieter or darker. It's very formal, but it's just a changing of space. I couldn't imagine...it's an architectural space, mentally and visually, so in that way it does parallel the text.

TW: I particularly liked the way in which there were a lot of head spots and the continual reference to the guillotine with the shafts of light. Was that something that came out of the drawings at an early stage?

RW: Yes.

TW: You seem to have given a lot of attention to gesture and voice - highlighting them - but it doesn't seem to suggest psychological depths in the character...

RW: No. I'm not interested in that.

TW: It suggested instead that something is trying to be communicated that doesn't reside in the text, nor does it reside within the performer but is what you might call stuff from elsewhere that you're trying to put in that doesn't have a voice in the text as such.

RW: I'm presenting the text with a certain distance which allows for interior reflection and exterior reflection. We hear and we see with interior and exterior audio-visual screens. The problem I have with most theatre is that it is too oppressive and that it's demanding too much exterior attention, be it audial or visual. So, if you blink your eyes like you just did, what did you see for that brief second? You don't know. But perhaps for a second you dream, a negative image? There's this interior

reflection and we hear and see exteriorly and interiorly all the time. You see it on the subway in New York when you push out all the noise. It can be excruciatingly loud and people don't hear it. They're in another mental state. Or there can be a murder right up on us and we just don't see it - we're interiorly closed. So in this theatre, if you're maintaining this balance between time and space with this tension and this cross, there's a certain sort of place that one can find where one is listening inside and outside, where one is both blind and deaf. And if you do that, then one can be free to hear the text, but one can allow mental space for interior reflection which can be other things too. And it's the same thing with seeing - you can see what's on stage but you can also see interiorly. So there's a balance between interior and exterior, an awareness, and that has to do with this space-time construction. If you have a silent movie and you watch a silent movie, the edges of the audial frame are boundless, because you can imagine it. Let's say you're listening to a radio drama, the edges of the visual screen are boundless in the sense that you're free to imagine the pictures. The problem with most theatre is that the audial and visual screens are bound by the frames so that what you're seeing is usually seconding what you hear, so then the frames become limited. But if you put together something like a radio drama with a silent movie, where the edges of the audial and visual screens are boundless, then there's another mental space for hearing and seeing. [conversation halted for another rehearsal]

TW: Going back to Danton's Death, it seemed to have a tighter, directed staging than some of your other works. Some of your comments last night [while giving notes after a preview performance] concerning the character at the interval coming offstage so that the audience didn't feel that they were missing something if they left at the interval. It seemed that you were perhaps trying to make decisions for the audience that in earlier works the audience had to determine for themselves. Also, the

character entering on the balcony [whom Wilson wanted to enter more swiftly so as not to clash with the action on the stage below]...

RW: Well, it relates to a particular work. I think it's very clear that this is a pause now and that the piece is not continuing, its in two parts, four acts, two in the first part, and you want to make that very clear..

TW: But where the piece called for it you would..

RW: There are some pieces where you want, maybe, a feeling that it's still going on. I think here this is a pause.

TW: Right

RW: The piece is not over, it's a pause.

TW: In the same vein, you talk about getting "edges" in the work, having what seem to be sharp delineations between one element and another. Is that again related to the work - in the earlier work there is a sense of elements merging, having less defined edges a lot of the time, or is that making..

RW: I don't think so. You see it in the earlier work, you see it in Freud , there were layers and zones of different times, different speeds, different realities. So there was always a concern about is this reality different from that reality? Is this speed different from that speed? There were stratified zones in virtual space that were layered together and one could see through these transparencies. So, I don't think it's lost.

TW: Are there any characteristics you think that don't follow through from your earlier work, that maybe you have left behind you?

RW: I think you leave things behind and you bring them back and you rediscover them and you find other things. It's like a tree that grows and gets older and more weathered, but has different seasons there's this continuum, that it's one body of work, but not just a single work, not separate.

TW: Do you think people try to fix you stylistically, as having certain characteristics within you work, and do you feel the need to push against that, or is it not something that concerns you?

RW: Oh, not so much. I think one listens to one's inner rhythm within oneself, and that's what you're dictating. Martha Graham said she charted the graph of her heart, and I think that's more important than what people say about you. Also you have to trust yourself. Martha Graham said "the body doesn't lie" and I think ultimately you have just yourself to rely on. Yes, you ask other people or you have your friends tell you, you're influenced by the things people say but ultimately you have what's in here [gestures to himself]. I rely on some inner strength or knowledge that's not something rational. Sometimes when I'm drawing: should I do this or should I do that - I just shut my eyes and then something just says 'do that', and I go with it.

TW: OK. Thank you.

## Morris bibliography

---

- Anon. "[review of Robert Morris]." Art International. May 1965.
- Anon. Twentieth Century Sculpture: Process and Presence. New York: Whitney Museum at Philip Morris, 1983.
- Antin, David. "Art and Information: 1: Grey Paint, Robert Morris." Art News. Vol.65 no.2. April 1966. pp.22-24.
- Bailly, Jean-Christophe. Duchamp. England: Art Data, 1986.
- Banes, Sally. "Democracy's Body: Judson Dance Theatre and Its legacy.", Performing Arts Journal. Vol.V PAJ 14 (no.2.) 1981. pp.98-107.
- Banham, Reyner. "Art in London: It was SRO - And a Disaster." The New York Times. 23 May 1971.
- Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968.
- Baudrillard, Jean. The Ecstasy of Communication. trans. Bernard & Caroline Schutze. New York: Semiotext(e), 1988.
- Berger, John. Ways of Seeing. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972.
- Berger, Maurice. Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s. New York: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Blok, C. "Minimal Art at the Hague." Art International. Vol.12 no.5. May 1968. pp.18-24.
- Bourden, David. "Art: Robert Morris." The Village Voice. 24 December 1964.
- Bradbury, Malcolm, and James McFarlane (eds.) Modernism: 1890-1930. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976.
- Brett, Guy. "Robert Morris: heavy-weight organiser". The Times. 28 April 1971.
- Buettner, Stewart. American Art Theory: 1945-1970. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981.
- Burnham, Jack. Beyond Modern Sculpture. New York: George Braziller, 1968.
- Burnham, Jack. "Robert Morris: Retrospective in Detroit." Artforum. Vol.8 no.7. March 1970. pp.67-75.
- Burnham, Jack. Great Western Salt Works: essays on the meaning of Post-Formalist art. New York: George Braziller, 1974.
- Cage, John. Silence. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1961.
- Calas, Nicholas, and Calas, Elena. Icons and Images of the Sixties. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1971.
- Castle, Ted. "Carolee Schneemann: The woman who uses her body as her art." Artforum. November 1980.
- Colpitt, Frances. Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990.
- Compton, Michael, and David Sylvester (eds.) Robert Morris. London: Tate

Gallery, 1971.

- Craig-Martin, Michael. Minimalism. Liverpool: Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 1990.
- Foster, Hal (ed.) Postmodern Culture. London: Pluto Press, 1985.
- Foster, Hal (ed.) Discussions in Contemporary Culture: Number One. Seattle: Bay Press, 1987.
- Frascina, Francis (ed.) Pollock and After. London: Harper and Row, 1985.
- Fried, Michael. "Shape as Form: Frank Stella's New Paintings." Artforum. Vol.V no.3. November 1966. pp.18-27.
- Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." Artforum. Vol.5 no.10. June 1967. pp.12-23.
- Friedman, Martin. "Robert Morris: Polemics and Cubes." Art International. Vol.10 no.10. December 1966. pp.23-24.
- Geldzahler, Henry. New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940-1970. London: Pall Mall Press, 1969.
- Gibson, Eric. "Art: The Real Robert Morris." New Criterion. The. March 1985. pp.55-56.
- Gibson, Eric. "Was Minimalist Art a Political Movement?" New Criterion. The. Vol.5 no.9. May 1987. pp.59-64.
- Gilbert-Rolfe, Jeremy. "Robert Morris: The complication of exhaustion." Artforum. September 1974.
- Glueck, Grace. "A feeling for felt." The New York Times. 28 April 1968.
- Goldwater, Robert. What is Modern Sculpture? New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1969.
- Goossen, E. C. The Art of the Real. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1968.
- Goossen, E. C. "The Artist Speaks: Robert Morris." Art in America. Vol. 58 no.3. May-June 1970. pp.104-11.
- Gosling, Nigel. "The 'have-a-go' show." The Observer Review. 2 May 1971.
- Greenberg, Clement. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch." Partisan Review. Vol.IV no.5. Fall 1939. pp.34-49. reprinted in Frascina, Francis (ed.) Pollock and After. London: Harper and Row, 1985. pp.21-23.
- Greenberg, Clement. "Modernist Painting." Arts Yearbook. Vol. 1. New York: 1961. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) The New Art. revised version of 1966 ed. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973. pp.66-77.
- Greenberg, Clement. "After Abstract Expressionism." Art International. Vol.VI no.8. October 1962. pp.24-32.
- Greenberg, Clement. "Recentness of Sculpture." American Sculpture of the Sixties. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1967. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968. pp.180-86.
- Greenberg, Clement. "Counter Avant-Garde." Art International. Vol.XV no.5. 20 May 1971. pp.16-19. reprinted in Masheck, Joseph (ed.) Marcel Duchamp in Perspective. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.

pp.122-33.

- Harrison, Charles, and Paul Wood (eds.) Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.
- Johnson, Ellen H. Modern Art and the Object: A century of changing attitudes. London: Thames and Hudson, 1976.
- Johnson, Ellen H. American Artists on Art from 1940 to 1980. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.
- Kaprow, Allan and Barbara Berman. Allan Kaprow. Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1967.
- Kozloff, Max. "9 in a Warehouse." Artforum. Vol.7 no.6. February 1969. pp.38-42 .
- Krauss, Rosalind. Passages in Modern Sculpture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1977.
- Kunsthalle. When Attitudes Become Form. Bern: Kunsthalle, 1969.
- Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from Philosophy in a New Key. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953.
- LeWitt, Sol. "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art." Artforum. Vol.5 no.10. June 1967. pp.79-83
- Lippard, Lucy R. "Rejective Art." Art International. Vol.10 no.8. October 1966. pp.33-37.
- Lippard, Lucy R. "Eros Presumptive." The Hudson Review. Vol.20. Spring 1967. pp. 91-99.
- Licht, Jennifer. Spaces. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970.
- Lippard, Lucy R. "Escalation in Washington." Art International. Vol.12 no.1. January 1968. pp.42-46.
- Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- McDonagh, Donald. "Unexpected Assemblage!" Dance Magazine. June 1965.
- McShine, Kynaston. Primary Structures. New York: Jewish Museum, 1966.
- Marck, Jan van der. American Art: Third Quarter Century. Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1973.
- Masheck, Joseph (ed.) Marcel Duchamp in Perspective. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.
- Mattick, Paul Jr. "Aesthetics and Anti-Aesthetics in the visual arts." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.51 no.2. Spring 1993. pp.253-59.
- Michelson, Annette. Robert Morris. Washington DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC and the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1969.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Dance." Tulane Drama Review. Winter 1965. pp.179-86.

- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 1." Artforum. Vol. 4 no.6. 4 February 1966 pp. 42-4.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 2." Artforum. Vol.5 no.2. October 1966: pp.20-3.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 3: Notes and Nonsequiturs." Artforum. Vol.5 no.10. June 1967. pp.24-29.
- Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." Artforum. Vol.6 no.8. April 1968. pp.33-35.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 4: Beyond Objects." Artforum. Vol.7 no.8. April 1969. pp.50-54.
- Morris, Robert. "Some Notes on the Phenomenology of Making: The Search for the Motivated." Artforum. Vol.8 no.8. April 1970. pp.62-66.
- Morris, Robert. "Some Splashes in the Ebb Tide." Artforum. Vol.11 no. 6. February 1973. pp.42-49.
- Morris, Robert. Robert Morris: Mirror Works 1961-78. New York: Leo Castelli Gallery, 1979.
- Morris, Robert. Robert Morris: The Felt Works. New York: Grey Art Gallery and Study Centre, 1989.
- Morris, Robert. "Three folds in the Fabric and Four Autobiographical Asides as Allegories (or Interruptions)." Art in America. Vol.77 no.11. November 1989. pp.142-51.
- Muller, Gregoire. The New Avant-Garde: Issues for the Art of the Seventies. London: Pall Mall Press, 1972.
- Nemser, Cindy. "Art Criticism and Perceptual Research." College Art Journal. Spring 1970. pp.326-29.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Minus Plato." Art and Artists. Vol.1. September 1966. pp.10-11.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space Part 1." Artforum. March 1976. pp.24-30.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Part II: The eye and the spectator." Artforum. April 1976. pp.26-34.
- Perrault, John. "A Minimal Future? Union-Made." Arts Magazine. Vol. 41. March 1967: p30.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert. Postminimalism. New York: Out of London Press, Inc., 1977.
- Propokoff, Stephen S. "Between Object and Environment." Art and Artists. Vol.4 no.6. September 1969. pp.16-17.
- Rainer, Yvonne. Yvonne Rainer: Work 1961-73. Halifax, Canada: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974.
- Reise, Barbara. "Untitled 1969: a footnote on art and minimal style hood." Studio International. Vol.177 no.910 April 1969. pp.166-72.
- Robins, Corinne. The Pluralist Era: American Art 1968 - 1981. New York: Harper and Row, 1984.



- Robinson, Jenefer. "The eliminability of Artistic Acts." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.36. Fall 1977. pp.81-94.
- Rockwell, John. "The Death and Life of Minimalism." The New York Times. 21 December 1986. pp.1,29 [sec.2].
- Rose, Barbara. "ABC Art." Art in America. Vol.53 no.5. October/November 1965. pp.57-69.
- Rose, Barbara (ed.) A New Aesthetic. Washington D.C.: Washington Gallery of Modern Art, 1967.
- Schneemann, Carolee. More than Meat Joy. McPherson, Bruce (ed.) New York: Documentext, 1979.
- Stangos, Nikos (ed.) Concepts of Modern Art. revised and enlarged ed. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981.
- Tisdall, Caroline. "Sculpture for performing on." Guardian Weekly. 8 May 1971.
- Tucker, Marcia. Robert Morris. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1970.
- Twentieth Century Sculpture: Process and Presence. New York: Whitney Museum at Philip Morris, 1983.
- Walker Art Center. Eight Sculptors: the ambiguous image. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1966.
- Wilson, William. "Hard Questions and Soft Answers." Art News. vol.68 no.7. November 1969. pp26-29.
- Wollheim, Richard. Art and its objects: An introduction to Aesthetics. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.

## Kaprow bibliography

- Anon. "Trend to the 'Anti-Art'." Newsweek. Vol.51 no.13. 31 March 1958. pp.94,96.
- Aronson, Arnold. The History and Theory of Environmental Scenography. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1977.
- Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968.
- Battcock, Gregory (ed.) The New Art. revised version of 1966 ed. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973.
- Battcock, Gregory and Robert Nickas (eds.) The Art of Performance. New York: Dutton, 1984.
- Becker, J., and W. Vostell. Happenings. Hamburg: Rowohlt's Deutsche Encyklopadie, 1965.
- Benamou, Michel, and Charles Caramello (eds.) Performance in Postmodern Culture. New York: Baumgartner Publications, 1977.
- Bennett, Susan. Theatre Audiences. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Berne, Eric, M.D. Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships. New York: Grove Press, 1964.
- Bigsby, C. W. E. A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama Volume 3: Beyond Broadway. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Buchloh, Benjamin H. D., Rosalind Krauss and Annette Michelson. "Joseph Beuys at the Guggenheim." October. no.12. Spring 1980. pp.3-21.
- Buettner, Stewart. American Art Theory: 1945-1970. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981.
- Bürger, Peter. Theory of the Avant-Garde. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Burnham, Jack. "Objects and Ritual: Towards a working ontology of art." Arts Magazine. December-January 1973. pp.28-32.
- Burns, Elizabeth. Theatricality: A Study of convention in the theatre and in social life. London: Longman, 1972.
- Cage, John. Silence. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1961.
- Cage, John, and Robin White. "An interview with John Cage." View. April 1978.
- Calas, Nicholas, and Calas, Elena. Icons and Images of the Sixties. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1971.
- Calder, John (ed.) New Writers IV - Plays and Happenings. London: Calder and Boyars, 1967.
- Chaim, Daphna Ben. Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1981.
- Dewey, Ken. "X-Ings." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10. no.2. Winter 1965.

pp.216-223.

Fried, Michael. "Art and Objecthood." Artforum vol.5. June 1967. pp.12-23. reprinted in Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968. pp.116-147.

Geldzahler, Henry. "Happenings: Theatre by Painters." Hudson Review. Vol.XVIII. no.4. Winter 1965. pp.581-86.

Geldzahler, Henry. New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940-1970. London: Pall Mall Press, 1969.

Glaser, Bruce, Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein et al. "Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol. A Discussion." Artforum. Vol.4 no.6. February 1966. pp.22-3.

Glusberg, Jorge. The Art of Performance. New York: undated.

Goldberg, Roselee. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present. London: Thames & Hudson, 1988.

Hansen, Al. A Primer of Happenings and Time/Space Art. New York: Something Else Press, 1965.

Hansen, Al. "Life in Destruction." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.32-35.

Harrison, Charles, and Paul Wood (eds.) Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

Hein, Hilde. "Performance as an aesthetic category." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.XXVIII no.3. Spring 1970. pp.381-86.

Henri, Adrian. Environments and Happenings. London: Thames and Hudson, 1974.

Hess, Thomas B. "Editorial: The Artist as a Company-Man." Art News. Vol.63 no.6. October 1964. p19.

Hindman, James T. "Self-Performance: Allan Kaprow's Activities." The Drama Review. Vol.23. no.1 [T81]. Spring 1979. pp.95-102.

Hughes, Robert. The Shock of the New. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981.

Huizinga, J. Homo Ludens. New York: Beacon Press, 1955.

Intermedia Artists Corporation. Intermedia Artists Corporation. unknown. (Exhibition Catalogue/Publicity material)

John Brockman Associates. Intermedia '68. New York: 1968.

Johnson, Ellen H. Modern Art and the Object: A century of changing attitudes. London: Thames and Hudson, 1976.

Johnson, Ellen H. ed. American Artists on Art from 1940 to 1980. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.

Johnston, Jill. "[review: Happening at Reuben Gallery]." Art News. Vol.60 no.4. Summer 1961. pp.61-2.

Kaprow, Allan. "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock." Art News. Vol. 57 no.6. October 1958. pp.24-26,55-57.

Kaprow, Allan. "Happenings in the New York Scene." Art News. Vol.60 no.3.

May 1961. pp.36-9,58-62.

Kaprow, Allan. "Impurity." Art News. Vol.61 no.9. January 1963. pp.30-32-55.

Kaprow, Allan. "A Service for the Dead." Art International. Vol.7 no.1. 25 January 1963. pp.46-7.

Kaprow, Allan. "An Artist's story of a Happening." The New York Times. 6 October 1963. p17.

Kaprow, Allan. "Two Happenings." City Lights Journal. no.2. 1964. pp.255-59.

Kaprow, Allan. "Should the Artist become a man of the world?" Art News. Vol.63 no.6. October 1964. pp.34-7,58.

Kaprow, Allan. "Calling." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.203-11.

Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1966.

Kaprow, Allan. Some Recent Happenings. New York: Something Else Press, 1966.

Kaprow, Allan. "The Happenings are Dead - Long live the Happenings." Artforum. Vol.IV no.7. March 1966. pp.36-9.

Kaprow, Allan. "Experimental Art." Art News. Vol.65 no.1. March 1966. pp.60-3,77-82.

Kaprow, Allan. "Letter to the editor." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.4. Summer 1966. pp.281-3.

Kaprow, Allan. Untitled Essay and other works. New York: Something Else Press, 1967.

Kaprow, Allan. "The Best Use of the Past (and Present) is Misuse." statement printed without title in "Jackson Pollock: An Artist's Symposium, Part 1." Art News. Vol.66 no.2. April 1967. pp.32-33,59-61.

Kaprow, Allan. "Self-Service: a Happening." The Drama Review. Spring 1968. pp.160-164.

Kaprow, Allan. "The Shape of the Art Environment: How antiform is 'Anti Form'?" Artforum. no.6. Summer 1968. pp.32-33.

Kaprow, Allan. "Education of the Un-Artist Part 1." Art News. February 1970. pp.28-31,66-67.

Kaprow, Allan. "Education of the Un-Artist Part 2." Art News. May 1971. pp.34-9,62-3.

Kaprow, Allan. "Education of the Un-Artist Part 3." Art in America. January-February 1974. pp.85-91.

Kaprow, Allan. "Video Art: Old Wine, New Bottle." Artforum. June 1974. pp.46-49.

Kaprow, Allan. Echo-logy. New York: D'Arc Press, 1975.

Kaprow, Allan. Rates of Exchange. New York: D'Arc Press, 1975.

Kaprow, Allan. "Take Off: An activity in Genova by Allan Kaprow." The Drama

Review. 1975

- Kaprow, Allan. Satisfaction. New York: M.L.D'Arc Gallery, 1976.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Non-Theatrical Performance." Artforum. May 1976. pp.45-51.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Participation Performance." Artforum. March 1977. pp.24-9.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Tail Wagging Dog." The Act. Vol.2 no.1. unknown. pp.10-12.
- Kaprow, Allan, and Barbara Berman. Allan Kaprow. Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1967.
- Kaprow, Allan, and Richard Schechner. "Extensions in Time and Space: an interview with Allan Kaprow." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.153-159.
- Kaye, Nick. "Something Material." Performance. June 1988. pp.17-18.
- Kaye, Nick. "The Aesthetics of Denial." Mediamatic. Vol.4 no.4. Summer 1990. pp.198-211.
- Kaye, Nick. "Postmodernism and Performance." Music Theatre Dance. Vol.1. Winter 1990. pp.3-11.
- Kirby, Michael. Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1965.
- Kirby, Michael. "The New Theatre." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.23-43.
- Kirby, Michael. "Allan Kaprow's 'Eat'." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.44-49.
- Kostelanetz, Richard. The Theatre of Mixed Means. New York: Pitman Publishing, 1968.
- Kostelanetz, Richard (ed.) Conversing with Cage. New York: Limelight Editions, 1988.
- Kultermann, Udo. Art Events and Happenings. trans. William Gabriel. London: Mathews Millar Dunbar, 1971.
- Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from Philosophy in a New Key. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953.
- Lebel, Jean-Jaques. "On the Necessity of Violation." The Drama Review. Vol.13 no.1 [T41]. Fall 1968. pp.89-105.
- Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. Movements in Art since 1945. London: Thames and Hudson, 1969.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. Art in the Seventies. Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1980.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- McDarragh, F.W. "Art." The Village Voice. 13th September 1962. p9.
- McNamara, Brooks, Jerry Rojo and Richard Schechner. Theatres, Spaces, Environments. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1975.

- Mondrian, Piet. The New Art - The New Life: The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian. Holzman, Harry and Martin S. James (eds.) Boston: 1986.
- Nemser, Cindy. "Subject-Object Body Art." Arts Magazine. September 1971. pp.38-42.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Art: Environment: Words' Exploits Law of Chance." The New York Times. 15 September 1962. p22.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space Part 1." Artforum. March 1976. pp.24-30.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Part II: The eye and the spectator." Artforum. April 1976. pp.26-34.
- Oldenburg, Claes. "Fotodeath." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.84-93.
- Propokoff, Stephen S. "Between Object and Environment." Art and Artists. Vol.4 no.6. September 1969. pp.16-17.
- Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Robbins, Eugenia S. "Performing Art." Art in America. Vol.54 no.4. July/August 1966. pp.107-11.
- Sayre, Henry M. The Object of Performance: The American avant-garde since 1970. London: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Schechner, Richard. "Happenings." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.229-32.
- Schechner, Richard. Environmental Theatre. New York: Hawthorn, 1973.
- Schechner, Richard. Essays on Performance Theory 1970-1976. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977.
- Schechner, R. Between Theatre and Anthropology. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.
- Schneemann, Carolee. More than Meat Joy. McPherson, Bruce (ed.) New York: Documentext, 1979.
- Seckler, Dorothy Gees. "The Audience is His Medium!" Art in America. Vol.51 no.2. April 1963. pp.62-7.
- Seitz, William. The Art of Assemblage. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1961.
- Sohm, H. (ed.) Happenings and Fluxus. Cologne: Koelnischer Kunstverein, 1970, unpaginated.
- Stangos, Nikos (ed.) Concepts of Modern Art. revised and enlarged ed. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981.
- Vostell, Wolf. "Wolf Vostell." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.8-9.
- Vostell, Wolf. "dé-coll-age." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.10-11.
- Wilson, Glenn. The psychology of the performing arts. London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985.

## Beuys bibliography

- Adams, Brooks. "Panel Discussion with Joseph Beuys." Arts Magazine. January 1980. pp.72-3.
- Adams, David. "Joseph Beuys (Occultism in avant-garde art: the case of Joseph Beuys; review article)." Art Journal. Vol.50.. Spring 1991. pp.96-98.
- Adams, David. "Joseph Beuys: Pioneer of a Radical Ecology." Art Journal Vol.51. Summer 1992. pp.26-34.
- Adriani, Gotz, Winnifred Konnertz and Karin Thomas. Joseph Beuys: Life and Works. trans. Patricia Lech. Cologne: Barron's Educational Series Inc., 1973.
- Ak, Edit de, and W. Robinson. "Beuys: Art Encage." Art in America. November/December 1974. pp.76-79.
- Ammann, Jean-Christophe. "A Talk - Joseph Beuys, Jannis Kounellis, Anselm Kiefer, Enzo Cucchi." Flash Art. Vol.128. May/June 1986. pp.36-39.
- Andre, M. "Joseph Beuys: Rene Block Gallery, Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York." Art News. Summer 1975. p143.
- Bailly, Jean-Christophe. Duchamp. England: Art Data, 1986.
- Ballatore, Sandy. "Beuys: Myth, Monster or Messiah?" Artweek. 14 January 1975. pp.1-2.
- Belz, Carl. "Boston: Joseph Beuys' American Debut." Art in America. Vol. 60. September/October 1972. pp.102-3.
- Benjamin, Walter. Illuminations Arendt, H (ed.) London: 1973.
- Berger, Maurice. Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s. New York: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Beuys, Joseph. "Joseph Beuys - Four Pages." Studio International. September 1970. pp.90-93.
- Beuys, Joseph. "Joseph Beuys talking at Documenta 5." Avalanche. Vol.5. Summer 1972. pp.12-15.
- Beuys, Joseph. "Art is the only power to free humankind from all repression." Avalanche. May 1974. pp.4-7.
- Beuys, Joseph, and Umberto Allemandi. "Joseph Beuys Superstar." trans. Dorina Morawetz. Bolaffi Arte. June 1974.
- Beuys, Joseph, and Rob Con. "Joseph Beuys in conversation with Rob Con." Primary Sources. no.1. 1979. pp.14-15.
- Beuys, Joseph, and Caroline Tisdall. Richtkräfte '74. New York: René Block Gallery, 1975.
- Borden, Lizzie. "Joseph Beuys: Drawings." Artforum. April 1973. pp.76-7.
- Bourden, David. "Beuys will be Beuys, Beckmann is Beckmann." The Village Voice. 28 April 1975. p98.
- Brussels: Galerie Isy Brachot. Joseph Beuys. Brussels: Galerie Isy Brachot,

1989.

- Buchloh, Benjamin H. D. "Beuys: The Twilight of the Idol: Preliminary notes for a critique." Artforum. Vol.18. January 1980. pp.35-41.
- Buchloh, Benjamin H. D., Rosalind Krauss and Annette Michelson. "Joseph Beuys at the Guggenheim." October. no.12. Spring 1980. pp.3-21.
- Buettner, Stewart. American Art Theory: 1945-1970. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981.
- Bürger, Peter. Theory of the Avant-Garde. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Burnham, Jack. "Objects and Ritual: Towards a working ontology of art." Arts Magazine. December-January 1973. pp.28-32.
- Burns, Elizabeth. Theatricality: A Study of convention in the theatre and in social life. London: Longman, 1972.
- Cage, John. Silence. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1961.
- Croghan, L.A. "Beuys, Joseph." Current Biography. July 1980. pp.3-5.
- Davis, Douglas. "Pied Piper." Newsweek. 1 May 1972. p87.
- Demarco, Richard. "Conversations with artists: Richard Demarco interviews Joseph Beuys, London (March 1982)." Studio International. Vol.195. September 1982. pp.46-7.
- Demarco, Richard. "Obituary." Studio International. Vol.199. March 1986. pp.54-55.
- de Domizio, Lucrezia, Buby Durini and Italo Tomassoni. Incontro con Beuys. Pescara, 1984.
- Dry, Graham. "Joseph Beuys, Objekte." The Burlington Magazine. March 1980. pp.221-2.
- Elam, Kier. The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama. London: Methuen, 1980.
- Eliade, Mircea. Shamanism: Archaic techniques of Ecstasy. (originally published in French as Le Chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase. Librairie Payot, Paris, 1951) trans. Willard R. Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.
- Fowler, H.W. & Fowler, F.G. (eds.) The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Frank, Peter. "Joseph Beuys, the most fascinating of enigmas." Art News. Vol.72. April 1973. p51.
- Frascina, Francis (ed.) Pollock and After. London: Harper and Row, 1985.
- Galloway, David D. "Report from Germany (Von hier aus: Trade Fair Complex, Dusseldorf)." Art in America. Vol.73. March 1985. pp.23-27.
- Galloway, David. "Beuys and Warhol: Aftershocks." Art in America. Vol.76. July 1988. pp.112-23.
- Ghent. Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst. Joseph Beuys: Tekeningen, Aquarellen, Goaches, Collages, Olieverven. Ghent. Museum van



Hedendaagse Kunst, 1977.

Harrison, Charles, and Paul Wood (eds.) Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

Hess, T. B. "The Germans are here! The Germans are here!" New York Magazine. 5 May 1975. pp.98-99.

Hughes, Robert. "The Noise of Beuys." Time. 12 November 1979. pp.89-90.

Institute of Contemporary Art, London. Art into Society, Society into Art. London: Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 1974.

Jappe, Georg. "A Joseph Beuys Primer." trans. David Britt. Studio International. Vol.182. September 1971. pp.65-9.

Jappe, Georg. "The Beuys Example." Studio International. Vol.184 no.950. December 1972. pp.228-29.

Jappe, Georg. "Not just a few are called, but everyone: Joseph Beuys in discussion with Georg Jappe." trans. John Wheelwright. Studio International. Vol.184 no.950. December 1972. pp.226-28.

Kaye, Nick. "Something Material." Performance. no.54. June-July 1988. pp.17-18.

Kirby, E. T. "The Shamanistic Origins of Popular Entertainments." The Drama Review. Vol.18 no.1. Spring 1974. pp.5-15.

Kramer, Hilton. "Beuys Celebration at Dia: Don't mention the War!" The New York Observer. 6 April 1992. pp.1,27.

Krauss, Rosalind. Passages in Modern Sculpture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1977.

Kuspit, Donald B. "Beuys: Fat,Felt and Alchemy." Art in America. Vol.68. May 1980. pp.78-79.

Kuspit, Donald. "Joseph Beuys: The body of the artist." Artforum. Vol.29. Summer 1991. pp.80-86.

Larson, Kay. "Joseph Beuys: Shaman, sham, or one of the most brilliant artists of our time." Art News. Vol.79. April 1980. pp.126-27.

Levin, Kim. "Art: Beuys: The Last Work." The Village Voice. 18 February 1986. p95.

Levy, Mark. "The Shaman is a gifted artist (Shamanism in the work of Yves Klien, Joseph Beuys, Mary Beth Edelson, Karen Finley)." High Performance. Vol.11. Fall 1988. pp.54-61.

Licht, Ira (ed.) Bodyworks. Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1975.

Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.

Lodge, David (ed.) 20th Century Literary Criticism: A Reader. London: Longman, 1972.

London, Institute of Contemporary Art. Art into Society, Society into Art. London: Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 1974.

- London, Victoria and Albert Museum. Joseph Beuys: Drawings. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1983.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Mackintosh, Alastair. "Beuys in Edinburgh." Art and Artists. November 1970. p10.
- Marzorati, Gerald. "Beuys will be Beuys." The Soho Weekly News. 1 November 1979. pp.8-9.
- Masheck, Joseph. (ed.) Marcel Duchamp in Perspective. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.
- Mayor, D. Fluxshoe. Devon: Beau Geste Press, 1972.
- Meyer, Ursula. "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare: Joseph Beuys: Actions." Art News. Vol.68. January 1970. pp.54-57,71.
- Morgan, Robert C. "Who was Joseph Beuys?" High Performance. Vol.9 no.1. 1986. pp.20-26.
- Morgan, Robert C. "Joseph Beuys: ideas and actions (Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York; exhibit)." Arts Magazine. Vol.63. March 1989. pp.100-101.
- Nairne, Sandy, Geoff Dunlop and John Wyver. State of the Art: Ideas and Images in the 1980s. London: Chatto and Windus, 1987.
- Nesbitt, Judith (ed.) Joseph Beuys. Liverpool: Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 1993.
- Neugass, Fritz. "Düsseldorf: Artists and Students rally to Beuys." Art News. Vol.72. February 1973. p77.
- Oliva, Achille B. "A Score by Joseph Beuys: We are the revolution." Domus. December 1971.
- Oliver, Cordelia. "Arts Guardian: Napoleon in a Scottish pond." The Guardian. 18 August 1970. p8.
- Oxford Museum of Modern Art. Joseph Beuys: The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland. Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1974.
- Pannenburg, Wolfhart. Jesus: God and Man. trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe. London: SCM Press Ltd, 1968.
- Papadakis, Andreas C. Dr (ed.) German Art Now. London: Academy Editions, 1989.
- Perreault, John. "Beuys and Coyote: An eerie duet." The Village Voice. 6 June 1974. pp.41-42,44.
- Price, Jonathan. "Listening to Joseph Beuys: A Parable of Dialogue." Art News. Vol.73. Summer 1974. pp.50-52.
- Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Redmond, James. (ed.) Themes in Drama Vol 5: Drama and Religion. London, Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Rickey, Carrie. "Where the Beuys are." The Village Voice. 26 November 1979. p99.

- Rickey, Carrie. "Joseph Beuys, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts." Artforum February 1980. p95.
- Robinson, Walter. "Obituary." Art in America. Vol.74. March 1986. p182.
- Rosenthal, Mark. Joseph Beuys: Blitzschlag mit Lichtschien auf Hirsch: Lightning with Stag in its Glare. trans. Max Wechsler and Jennifer Greitschus. Frankfurt am Main: 1991.
- Schellmann, Jorg (ed.) Joseph Beuys: Multiples (Catalogue Raisonné of Multiples and Prints 1965-1985). Munich and New York: Edition Schellmann, 1980. unpaginated.
- Schjeldahl, Peter. "Art: How German Was He?" The Village Voice. 23 June 1992. p97.
- Schneede, Uwe M. "Art: Relics of the Shaman - Big Beuys Retrospective in Berlin." Kultur Chronik. no.3. 1988. pp 4-8.
- Sharp, Willoughby. "An Interview with Joseph Beuys." Artforum. Vol.8. December 1969. pp.40-47.
- Silverman, Hugh J. (ed.) Postmodernism - Philosophy and the Arts. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall Inc, 1990.
- Smith, Roberta. "Rene Block Gallery, New York, Coyote." Artforum. September 1974. pp.74-75.
- Stevens, Mark. "Art: Art's Medicine Man." Newsweek. 12 November 1979. pp.76-7.
- Storr, Robert. "Beuys's Boys." Art in America. Vol.76. March 1988. pp.96-103,167.
- Temkin, Ann, and Bernice Rose (eds.) Thinking is Form: The Drawings of Joseph Beuys. London: Thames and Hudson, 1993.
- Tisdall, Caroline. Beuys: Coyote. Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 1976.
- Tisdall, Caroline. "Jimmy Boyle/Joseph Beuys: A dialogue." Studio International. Vol.191. March-April 1976. pp.144-145.
- Tisdall, Caroline. "Coyote: I Like America and America like me: One week's performance on the occasion of the opening of the René Block Gallery, New York, May 1974 " Studio International. vol.192. July-August 1976. pp.36-40.
- Tisdall, Caroline. "Frankfurt: The Beuys Class." Studio International. January-February 1977. p29.
- Tisdall, Caroline. Joseph Beuys. New York and London: Thames and Hudson, 1979.
- Wallis, Brian (ed.) Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation. Boston: David R Godine, Publisher, Inc, 1984.
- Wiegand, Wilfried, et al. Joseph Beuys: In Memoriam Joseph Beuys. Obituaries, Essays. trans. Timothy Nevill. Bonn: Inter Nationes, 1986.
- Wijers, Louwrien and Johan Pijnappel (eds.) Art meets Science and Spirituality in a changing economy. London: Art & Design, 1990.

## Burden bibliography

- "Vito Acconci" Avalanche. no.6. Fall 1972.
- Acconci, Vito and Liza Bear. "Interview with Vito Acconci." Avalanche. Vol.6. Fall 1972.
- Acconci, Vito and Louwrien Wijers. Vito Acconci talks to Louwrien Wijers. Velp, Holland: Kantoor voor Cultuur Extracten, 1978.
- Acconci, Vito and Robin White. "An interview with Vito Acconci." View. November 1979.
- Auslander, Philip. "Holy Theatre and Catharsis." Theatre Research International. Vol.9. Spring 1984. pp.16-29.
- Auslander, Philip. "Toward a concept of the political in postmodern theatre." Theatre Journal. Vol.39 no.1. 1987. pp.20-34.
- Auslander, Philip. "Live Performance in a Mediatized Culture." Essays in Theatre. Vol.11 no.1. November 1992.
- Barthes, Roland. Image. Music. Text. London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1977.
- Battcock, Gregory and Robert Nickas (eds.) The Art of Performance. New York: Dutton, 1984.
- Baudrillard, Jean. The Ecstasy of Communication. trans. Bernard & Caroline Schutze. New York: Semiotext(e), 1988.
- Bear, Liza. "Chris Burden...Back to you." Avalanche. May/June 1974. pp.12-13.
- Bear, Liza, and Willoughby Sharp. "Chris Burden: The Church of Human Energy." Avalanche. no.8. Summer/Fall 1974. pp.54-61.
- Benamou, Michel and Charles Caramello (eds.) Performance in Postmodern Culture. New York: Baumgartner Publications, 1977.
- Berger, John X. and Oliver Richon (eds.) Other than Itself (Writing Photography). Manchester: Cornerhouse Publications, 1989.
- Bersani, Leo. The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Bourden, David. "Art: The Artist as Sex Object." New York Magazine. 16 September 1974. p56.
- Bronson, A.A. and P. Gale (eds.) Performance by Artists. Toronto: Art Metropole, 1979.
- Burden, Chris. Chris Burden 71-73. Los Angeles: 1974.
- Burden, Chris. "Chris Burden." Flash Art. Vol.56/7. June/July 1975. p40.
- Burden, Chris. B Car. 1977.
- Burden, Chris. 1974-1977. Los Angeles: 1978.
- Burden, Chris. "The Curse of Big Job." High Performance. Vol.2 no.1. March 1979. pp 2-3.
- Burden, Chris and Jim Moisan. "Border Crossing (Chris Burden questioned by

- Jim Moisan)." High Performance. Vol.2 no.1. March 1979. pp.5-11.
- Burden, Chris. "Coals to Newcastle." High Performance. Vol.2 no.1. March 1979. pp.12-13.
- Burden, Chris. "Artist's Notes." High Performance. Summer 1980. p18.
- Burden, Chris. Chris Burden: A Twenty Year Survey. California, Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1988.
- Burnham, Linda. "Per/For/Mance: American Artists in Italy." High Performance. Summer 1980. pp.17-18.
- Burnham, Jack. "Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art." Artforum. Vol.8 no.6. February 1970. pp.37-43.
- Burnham, Jack. "Objects and Ritual: Towards a working ontology of art." Arts Magazine. December-January 1973. pp.28-32.
- Burnham, Jack. Great Western Salt Works: essays on the meaning of Post-Formalist art. New York: George Braziller, 1974.
- Butterfield, Jan and Chris Burden. "Through the Night Softly." Arts Magazine. Vol.49. December-January 1975. pp.68-71.
- Calas, Nicholas, and Elena Calas. Icons and Images of the Sixties. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1971.
- Calas, Nicholas. "Bodyworks and purposes." Artforum. Vol.16 no.5. January 1978. pp.33-37.
- Carr, C. "This is only a test: Chris Burden." Artforum. September 1989. pp.117-21.
- Castle, Ted. "Carolee Schneemann: The woman who uses her body as her art." Artforum. November 1980. pp.64-70.
- Cavaliere, Barbara. "Chris Burden." Arts Magazine. June 1979. p4.
- Celant, Germano. "Vito Acconci." Domus. no.509. April 1972. pp.54-56.
- Chaim, Daphna Ben. Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1981.
- Chalupecky, Jindrich. "Art and Sacrifice." Flash Art. February-April 1978. pp.35-37.
- Chin, Daryl. "Contemplating the Navel: The use and abuse of video art." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV PAJ 10/11 (nos.1/2.) 1979. pp.62-69.
- Clothier, Peter. "Chris Burden: The artist as hero." Flash Art. January-February 1980. pp.49-50.
- Collins, Jim. "Reviews: Chris Burden, Ronald Feldman Gallery." Artforum. May 1974. p12.
- Dakin, Sue. "Insanity and Death." High Performance. Winter 1981-82. pp.26-29.
- Dry, Graham. "Joseph Beuys, Objekte." The Burlington Magazine. March 1980. pp.221-2.
- Foster, Hal (ed.) Postmodern Culture. London: Pluto Press, 1985.

- Frank, Peter. "Auto-art: Self-indulgent? And How!" Art News. September 1976. pp.43-48.
- Frank, Peter. "Performance Art in New York: Approaching the Eighties." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV no.1/2. 1979. pp.125-28.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Beyond the Pleasure Principle." (1920) in The Pelican Freud Library Volume 11- On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis. trans. under the general editorship of Strachey, James. Harmondsworth, Middlesex : Penguin Books Ltd, 1984. pp.275-338.
- Gambrell, Jamey. "Disarming Metaphors." Art in America. Vol.72. January 1984. pp.83-85.
- George, David. "On ambiguity: Towards a Post-Modern Performance Theory." Theatre Research International. Spring 1989. pp.71-85.
- Glusberg, Jorge. The Art of Performance. New York: undated.
- Goldberg, Roselee. "Space as Praxis." Studio International. Vol.190 no.977. September-October 1975. pp.136-142.
- Harre, Rom. Physical Being: A Theory for a Corporeal Psychology. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1991.
- Hoffman, Fred. "Chris Burden's Humanism." Artweek. 27 October 1979. pp.1,16.
- Horvitz, Robert. "Chris Burden." Artforum. Vol.14. May 1976. pp.24-31.
- Houedard, Dom Sylvester. "Aesthetics of the Death Wish." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.48-9.
- Hughes, Robert. The Shock of the New. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981.
- Hughes-Hallet, Lucy. "Peace on Earth? Chris Burden's Investigations." Performance Magazine. no.62. November 1990. pp.16-25.
- Kaye, Nick. "Breaking the Frame." Performance. no.56/57. Summer 1989. pp.23-5.
- Kaye, Nick. "The Aesthetics of Denial." Mediamatic. Vol.4 no.4. Summer 1990. pp.198-211.
- Kozloff, Max. "Pygmalion Reversed." Artforum. November 1975. pp.30-7.
- Krauss, Rosalind. "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism." October. no.1. Spring 1976. pp.50-64.
- Krauss, Rosalind. "Notes on the Index: '70s Art in America." October. no.3. Spring 1977. pp.68-81.
- Kultermann, Udo. Art Events and Happenings. trans. William Gabriel. London: Mathews Millar Dunbar, 1971.
- Licht, Ira (ed.) Bodyworks. Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1975.
- Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.
- Lippard, Lucy R. "Pains and pleasures of rebirth: Womens' Body Art." Art in America. May/June 1976. pp.73-81.

- Loeffler, Carl E. and Darlene Tong (eds.) Performance Anthology: Source Book for a Decade of California Performance Art. San Francisco: Contemporary Arts Press, 1980.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. Movements in Art since 1945. London: Thames and Hudson, 1969.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. Art in the Seventies. Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1980.
- Luzern Kunstmuseum. Vito Acconci. Lucern: Lucern Kunstmuseum, 1978.
- Liotard, Jean-François. "Presenting the unrepresentable: The sublime." Artforum. April 1982. pp.64-69.
- Liotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Liotard, Jean-François. The Lyotard Reader. Benjamin, Andrew (ed.) Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989.
- McEvilley, Thomas. "Marina Abramovic/Ulay." Artforum. September 1983. pp.52-55.
- Marioni, Tom. "Terry Fox: Himself." Art and Artists. Vol.7 no.10. January 1973. pp.38-41.
- Mayer, Rosemary. "Performance and Experience." Arts Magazine. December/January 1973. pp.33-6.
- Mayer, Rosemary. "Language and Visions." Arts Magazine. September/October 1973. pp.65-66.
- Menna, Filiberto, and Alberto Boatto. "Buri....and Fontano." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.28-31.
- Muller, Gregoire. The New Avant-Garde: Issues for the Art of the Seventies. London: Pall Mall Press, 1972.
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Vito Acconci: A Retrospective 1969 to 1980. Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1980.
- Nemser, Cindy. "An Interview with Vito Acconci." Arts Magazine. March 1971. pp.20-23.
- Nemser, Cindy. "Subject-Object Body Art." Arts Magazine. September 1971. pp.38-42.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space Part 1." Artforum. March 1976. pp.24-30.
- O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Part II: The eye and the spectator." Artforum. April 1976. pp.26-34.
- Perreault, John. "Cockroach Art." The Village Voice. 8 April 1971. pp.21,23.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert. "Vito Acconci and the Conceptual Performance." Artforum. April 1972. pp.47-49.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert. "Theater of the Conceptual: Autobiography and Myth." Artforum. Vol.12 no.2. October 1973. pp.40-46.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert. Postminimalism. New York: Out of London Press, Inc., 1977.

- Plagens, Peter. "Site Wars." Art in America. January 1982. pp.90-98.
- Pluchart, Francois. "Risk as the practice of thought." Flash Art. February-April 1978. pp.39-40.
- Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Rickey, Carrie. "The reason for the neutron bomb." Flash Art. June/July 1979. p43.
- Robins, Corinne. The Pluralist Era: American Art 1968 - 1981. New York: Harper and Row, 1984.
- Rosenthal, Rachel. "Performance and the Masochist tradition." High Performance. Winter 1981. pp.22-25.
- Sayre, Henry M. The Object of Performance: The American avant-garde since 1970. London: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Scarry, Elizabeth. The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Schechner, Richard. Essays on Performance Theory 1970-1976. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977.
- Schechner, R. Between Theatre and Anthropology. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.
- Schneemann, Carolee. More than Meat Joy. McPherson, Bruce (ed.) New York: Documentext, 1979.
- Schwartz, Ellen. "Vito Acconci: I want to put the viewer on shaky ground." Art News. Summer 1981. pp.93-99.
- Silverman, Hugh J. (ed.) Postmodernism - Philosophy and the Arts. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall Inc, 1990.
- Sontag, Susan. Against Interpretation and other essays. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1961.
- Sontag, Susan. On Photography. New York: Farrar, Straus Giroux, 1973.
- Stangos, Nikos (ed.) Concepts of Modern Art. revised and enlarged ed. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981.
- Stein, Gertrude. Geography and Plays (1908-20). Boston: The Four Seas Company 1922, reissued New York: Something Else Press, 1968.
- Stephano, Effie. "Image Changes: Interview with Vito Acconci." Art and Artists. Vol.8. February 1974. pp.24-27.
- Stoddart, Hugh. "Chris Burden." Performance. Vol.10. unknown. pp.13-4.
- Vergine, Lea. Il corpo come linguaggio. La "Body-art" e storie simili. Milan: Giampaola Prearo Editore, 1974.
- Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. The Anxious Edge: Eight Artists. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1982.
- Wright, Elizabeth. Psychoanalytic Criticism. London: Methuen & Co, 1984.



## Wilson bibliography

- Alenikoff, Frances. "Scenario: A Talk with Robert Wilson." Dance Scope. Vol.10 no.1. Fall/Winter 1975. pp.11-20.
- Anon. "A poetic and evasive American 'Dream'." L'Unita. 29 April 1971.
- Anon. "The Talk of the Town: Einstein at the Met." The New Yorker. 6 December 1976. pp.99-100.
- Aragon, Louis. "An Open Letter to Andre Breton from Louis Aragon." trans. Linda Moses and Jean-Paul Lavergne. Performing Arts Journal. Spring 1976.
- Armstrong, Gordon S. "Images in the interstice: The Phenomenal Theatre of Robert Wilson." Modern Drama. Vol.31. January 1988.
- Arens, Katherine. "Robert Wilson: Is Postmodern Performance Possible?" Theatre Journal. Vol.43. 1991. pp.14-40.
- Aronson, Arnold. "Wilson/Knowles' The \$ value of man." The Drama Review. Vol.19 no.3 [T67]. Fall 1975. pp.106-110.
- Auslander, Philip. "Toward a concept of the political in postmodern theatre." Theatre Journal. Vol.39 no.1. 1987. pp.20-34.
- Baker, Rob. "Einstein On the Beach: Times Three." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. p17.
- Baker, Rob. "The Mystery Is in the Surface." Theatre Crafts. Vol.19 no.8. October 1985. pp.22-3,88.
- Barthes, Roland. Image, Music, Text. London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1977.
- Baracks, Barbara. "Einstein on the Beach." Artforum. March 1977. pp.30-36.
- Barnes, Clive. "Stage: Deafman Glance." The New York Times. 7 March 1971.
- Barnes, Clive. "Must there be a story?" The New York Times. 14 March 1971.
- Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968.
- Battcock, Gregory and Robert Nickas (eds.) The Art of Performance. New York: Dutton, 1984.
- Baudrillard, Jean. The Ecstasy of Communication. trans. Bernard & Caroline Schutze. New York: Semiotext(e), 1988.
- Benamou, Michel and Charles Caramello (eds.) Performance in Postmodern Culture. New York: Baumgartner Publications, 1977.
- Berger, Maurice. Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s. New York: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Bigsby, C. W. E. A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama Volume 3: Beyond Broadway. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Birringer, Johannes. Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.
- Blau, Herbert. To all Appearances: Ideology and Performance. London and

New York: Routledge, 1992.

Brecht, Stefan. The original theatre of the City of New York From the mid-60s to the mid-70s: Book 1 - The Theatre of visions: Robert Wilson. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978.

Burckhardt, Jacqueline, and Bice Curiger. "The Weight of a grain of dust." Parkett. Vol.16. 1988. pp.111-21.

Cage, John, Richard Foreman and Richard Kostelanetz. "dialogue:Art in the Culture." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV no.1/2. 1979. pp.70-84.

Calder, Nigel. Einstein's Universe: A Guide to the Theory of Relativity. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982.

Chaim, Daphna Ben. Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1981.

Chaudhuri, Una. "When's the play? Time and the theory of Drama." Theater. Summer/Fall 1991. pp.46-51.

Copeland, Roger. "Postmodern Dance Postmodern Architecture Postmodernism." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.VII no.1. 1983. pp.27-43.

Croyden, Margaret. Lunatics, Lovers and Poets. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974.

Curtiss, Thomas Quinn. "Bob Wilson Spectacle, 'Einstein on the Beach'." International Herald Tribune. 31 July 1976.

Deak, Frantisek. "Robert Wilson." The Drama Review Vol.18. no.2 [T62]. June 1974. pp.67-80.

Denby, Edwin. "You never heard of a silent opera?" The New York Times. 9 December 1973 p10 [sec.D].

Fairbrother, Trevor (ed.) Robert Wilson's Vision. New York: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston/Abrams, 1988.

Falaise, Maxime de la, and Nenna Eberstadt. "Einstein at the Met." Andy Warhol's Interview. February 1977. pp.27-30.

Finter, Helga. "Experimental Theatre and Semiology of Theatre: The Theatricalisation of Voice." [trans. Walker, E.A & Grargal, Kathryn] Modern Drama. January 1983. pp.501-17.

Flakes, Susan. "Robert Wilson's Einstein on the Beach." The Drama Review. Vol.20 no.4. [T72] December 1976. pp.69-82.

Foreman, Richard. "The Life and Times of Sigmund Freud." The Village Voice. 1 January 1970.

Foreman, Richard. Plays and Manifestos. Davy,Kate (ed.) New York: New York University Press, 1976.

Frenais, Rob La. "The Civil Warrior." Performance. Vol.38. December-February 1986. pp.37-41.

George, David. "On ambiguity: Towards a Post-Modern Performance Theory." Theatre Research International. Spring 1989. pp.71-85.

Glass, Philip. "Notes on Einstein on the Beach." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.II no.3. Winter 1978. pp.63-70.

- Glass, Philip. Opera on the Beach. London: Faber and Faber, 1987.
- Goldberg, Roselee. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present. London: Thames & Hudson, 1988.
- Gruen, John. "Is it a Play? An Opera? No it's a Wilson." The New York Times. 16 March 1975. pp.1,7.
- Gussow, Mel. "Stage View: 'Einstein' Beckons Us to the Fourth Dimension." The New York Times. 23 December 1984. p3 [sec.H].
- Harris, Dale. "Robert Wilson's Epic Vision." Connoisseur. April 1984. pp.100-105.
- Highwater, Jamake. "Einstein on the Beach: A Primal Drumming." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. p15.
- Howell, John. "Forum: What a Legend Becomes." Artforum. March 1985 p90.
- Jones, Robert. "Robert Wilson's 'Einstein' returns to the stage" The New York Times. 2 December 1984. pp.5,24.
- Jouffrey, Alain. "[review of *Deafman Glance*]." Les Lettres Francaises. Vol.1388. 2 June 1971.
- Jowitt, Deborah. "A parade, never concluding." The Village Voice. 4 March 1971.
- Jowitt, Deborah. "What is  $E=MC^2$  to a Dreamer?" The Village Voice. 20 December 1976.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Happenings in the New York Scene." Art News. Vol.60 no.3. May 1961. pp.36-9,58-62.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Self-Service: a Happening." The Drama Review. Spring 1968. pp.160-164.
- Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1966.
- Kaye, Nick. "Postmodernism and Performance." Music Theatre Dance. Vol.1 Winter 1990. pp.3-11.
- Kingsley, April. "'Einstein on the Beach': What You See is What You See." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. pp.15-6.
- Kirby, E.T. (ed.) Total Theatre. New York: Dutton, 1969.
- Kisselgoff, Anna. "Robert Wilson Play, 'Deafman' opening." The New York Times. 25 February 1971.
- Kostelanetz, Richard (ed.) Essaying Essays: Alternative Forms of Exposition. New York: Out of London Press, 1975.
- Krauss, Rosalind. Passages in Modern Sculpture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1977.
- LaCoste, Michel Concil. "The Heritage of Painting in 'Deafman Glance.'" Le Monde. 10 June 1971.
- Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from Philosophy in a New Key. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953.
- Langworthy, Douglas. "'Listen to the pictures' Robert Wilson & German

- Theatre Criticism." Theater. December 1991. pp.35-40.
- Lehmann, Hans-Thies. "Robert Wilson: Scenographer." Parkett. Vol.16. 1988. pp.66-9.
- Lindenberger, Herbert. "From Opera to Postmodernity: On Genre, Style, Institutions." in Perloff, Marjorie (ed.) Postmodern Genres. London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988. pp.38-53.
- Lipman, Samuel. "Einstein's Long March to Brooklyn." The New Criterion. Vol.3 no.6. February 1985. pp.15-24.
- Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Lyotard Reader. Benjamin, Andrew (ed.) Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989.
- McNamara, Brooks, Jerry Rojo and Richard Schechner. Theatres, Spaces, Environments. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1975.
- Marranca, Bonnie. The Theatre of Images. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977.
- Mazars, Pierre. "Deafman Glance." Le Figaro. 20 May 1971.
- Owens, Craig. "'Einstein on the Beach': The Primacy of Metaphor." October. no.4 pp.21-32.
- Owens, Craig. "The Allegorical Impulse - Part 2." October. no.13. Summer 1980. pp.64-80.
- Poirot-Delpech, Bertrand. "At the Nancy Festival - From Spanish Reality to American imagination." Le Monde. 25 April 1971.
- Quadri, Franco. "Robert Wilson: It's about time." Artforum. October 1984. pp.76-82.
- Rabkin, Gerald. "Einstein on the Beach: Beached." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. p17.
- Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Rockwell, John. "Music: 'Einstein' returns briefly." The New York Times. 17 December 1984. p13 [sec.C].
- Rockwell, John. "The Death and Life of Minimalism." The New York Times. 21 December 1986. pp.1,29 [sec.2].
- Rogoff, Gordon. "Time, Wilson, and what a play should do." Theater. Summer/Fall 1991. pp.52-53.
- Sainer, Arthur. "Worms, apes, eyes, angels, ladies, fish." The Village Voice. 4 March 1971.
- Sargent, David. "Einstein on the Beach: The Met will dance to a mysterious tune." The Village Voice. 22 November 1976. pp.52-3,55.
- Sayre, Henry M. The Object of Performance: The American avant-garde since

1970. London: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Schechner, Richard. Environmental Theatre. New York: Hawthorn, 1973.
- Schechner, Richard. "The Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-Garde (I)." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.V PAJ 14 (no.2.) 1981. pp.48-63.
- Schechner, Richard. "The Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-Garde (II)." Performing Arts Journal Vol.V PAJ 15 (no.3.) 1981. pp.9-19.
- Searle, Judith. "How long does it take to peel a red onion?" The New York Times. 12 November 1972. pp.1,5 [sec.D].
- Shank, Theodore. American Alternative Theatre. London: Macmillan, 1982.
- Shyer, Laurence. Robert Wilson and his Collaborators. New York: Theatre Communications Group Inc, 1989.
- Siegel, Marcia B. "A theatre of the mind's eye." Sunday Herald Traveller. 21 March 1971.
- Siegel, Marcia B. "'Einstein on the Beach': How to Build a Cloud." Soho Weekly News. 21 February 1976. pp.16-7.
- Simmer, Bill. "Robert Wilson and therapy." The Drama Review Vol.20 no.1 [T69]. Winter 1976. pp.99-110.
- Simmer, Bill. "Actress from Iowa: Sue Sheehy." The Drama Review. Vol.20 no.3 [T71]. September 1976. pp.67-74.
- States, Bert O. Great Reckonings in Little Rooms: On the Phenomenology of Theater. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- Stearns, Robert (ed.) Robert Wilson: The Theatre of Images. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1984.
- Taubin, Amy. "Talking Through customs at the video border." Alive. Vol.1 no.2. September/October 1982.
- Tomkins, Calvin. "Time to Think: Profile of Robert Wilson." The New Yorker. 13 January 1973. pp.38-62.
- Vanden Heuvel, Michael. "Complementary Spaces: Realism, Performance and a New Dialogics of Theatre." Theatre Journal. Vol.44. 1992. pp.47-58.
- Wetzsteon, Ross. "Mounting Einstein: There's no business like the Avant-Garde Business." The Village Voice. 6 December 1976. pp.113-5.
- Wilson, Robert. "...I thought I was hallucinating." The Drama Review. Vol.21 no.4 [T76]. December 1977. pp.75-78.
- Wilson, Robert. "I was sitting on my patio this guy appeared I thought I was hallucinating." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV PAJ 10/11 (no.1-2.) 1979. pp.200-218.
- Winterton, Bradley. "Paris: The Theatre of Trance." Time Out. 18 June 1971. p34.

## General Bibliography

Note: This bibliography, as well as the subject-specific bibliographies for chapters 1-5, follows the conventions of *The MLA Handbook* as interpreted by the Papyrus Database v7.08.

### BOOKS

- Acconci, Vito, and Louwrien Wijers. Vito Acconci talks to Louwrien Wijers. Velp, Holland: Kantoor voor Cultuur Extracten, 1978.
- Adriani, Gotz, Winnifred Konnertz and Karin Thomas. Joseph Beuys: Life and Works. trans. Patricia Lech. Cologne: Barron's Educational Series Inc., 1973.
- Aronson, Arnold. The History and Theory of Environmental Scenography. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1977.
- Artaud, Antonin. The Theatre and Its Double. trans. Victor Corti. London: Calder and Boyars Ltd, 1970.
- Auslander, Philip. Presence and Resistance: Postmodernism and Cultural Politics in Contemporary American Performance. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1992.
- Bailly, Jean-Christophe. Duchamp. England: Art Data, 1986.
- Banes, Sally. Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980.
- Barthes, Roland. Mythologies. (translated by Annette Lavers) (originally published as "Mythologies" Editions du Seuil, Paris 1957.) London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1972.
- Barthes, Roland. Image, Music, Text. London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1977.
- Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Minimal Art. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968.
- Battcock, Gregory (ed.) The New Art. revised version of 1966 ed. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973.
- Battcock, Gregory (ed.) Idea art: A Critical Anthology. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973.
- Battcock, Gregory, and Robert Nickas (eds.) The Art of Performance. New York: Dutton, 1984.
- Baudrillard, Jean. America. London: Verso, 1988.
- Baudrillard, Jean. The Ecstasy of Communication. trans. Bernard & Caroline Schutze. New York: Semiotext(e), 1988.
- Becker, J., and W. Vostell. Happenings. Hamburg: Rowohlt's Deutsche Encyklopadie, 1965.
- Benamou, Michel, and Charles Caramello (eds.) Performance in Postmodern Culture. New York: Baumgartner Publications, 1977.
- Benjamin, Andrew, and Peter Osborne (eds.) Thinking Art: Beyond Traditional

- Aesthetics. London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 1991.
- Benjamin, Walter. Illuminations. Arendt, H (ed.) New York: Harcourt, 1968.
- Bennett, Susan. Theatre Audiences. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Bennett, Tony. Formalism and Marxism. New York: Metheun & Co., Ltd, 1979.
- Berger, John. Ways of Seeing. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972.
- Berger, John X. and Oliver Richon (eds.) Other than Itself (Writing Photography). Manchester: Cornerhouse Publications, 1989.
- Berger, Maurice. Labyrinths: Robert Morris. Minimalism, and the 1960s. New York: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Berne, Eric, M.D. Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships. New York: Grove Press, 1964.
- Bersani, Leo. The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Bigsby, C. W. E. A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama Volume 3: Beyond Broadway. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Birringer, Johannes. Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.
- Blau, Herbert. To all Appearances: Ideology and Performance. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Bradbury, Malcolm, and James McFarlane (eds.) Modernism: 1890-1930. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976.
- Brecht, Stefan. The original theatre of the City of New York From the mid-60s to the mid-70s: Book 1 - The Theatre of visions: Robert Wilson. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978.
- Bronson, A.A. and P. Gale (eds.) Performance by Artists. Toronto: Art Metropole, 1979.
- Buettner, Stewart. American Art Theory: 1945-1970. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981.
- Bürger, Peter. Theory of the Avant-Garde. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Burnham, Jack. Beyond Modern Sculpture. New York: George Braziller, 1968.
- Burnham, Jack. Great Western Salt Works: essays on the meaning of Post-Formalist art. New York: George Braziller, 1974.
- Burden, Chris. Chris Burden 71-73. Los Angeles: Chris Burden, 1974.
- Burden, Chris. B Car. Los Angeles: Chris Burden, 1977.
- Burden, Chris. 1974-1977. Los Angeles: Chris Burden, 1978.
- Burns, Elizabeth. Theatricality: A Study of convention in the theatre and in social life. London: Longman, 1972.
- Cage, John. Silence. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1961.

- Cage, John. A Year from Monday. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1968.
- Calas, Nicholas, and Elena Calas. Icons and Images of the Sixties. New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., Inc., 1971.
- Calder, John (ed.) New Writers IV - Plays and Happenings. London: Calder and Boyars, 1967.
- Calder, Nigel. Einstein's Universe: A Guide to the Theory of Relativity. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982.
- Chaim, Daphna Ben. Distance in the Theatre: The Aesthetics of Audience Response. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1981.
- Chipp, Herschel B. Theories of Modern Art. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.
- Colpitt, Frances. Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990.
- Compton, Michael. Art since 1945. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1976.
- Croyden, Margaret. Lunatics, Lovers and Poets. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974.
- Diacono, Mario. Vito Acconci. 1976.
- Docherty, Thomas. After Theory: Postmodernism/postmarxism. London and New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Dolan, Jill. The feminist spectator as critic. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988.
- de Domizio, Lucrezia, Buby Durini and Italo Tomassoni. Incontro con Beuys. Pescara, 1984.
- Dupuy, Jean (ed.) Collective Consciousness: Art Performances in the Seventies. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1980.
- Elam, Kier. The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama. London: Methuen, 1980.
- Eliade, Mircea. Shamanism: Archaic techniques of Ecstasy. trans. Willard R. Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.
- Foreman, Richard. Plays and Manifestos. Davy, Kate (ed.) New York: New York University Press, 1976.
- Foster, Hal (ed.) Postmodern Culture. London: Pluto Press, 1985.
- Foster, Hal (ed.) Discussions in Contemporary Culture: Number One. Seattle: Bay Press, 1987.
- Frascina, Francis (ed.) Pollock and After. London: Harper and Row, 1985.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Beyond the Pleasure Principle." (1920) in The Pelican Freud Library Volume 11- On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis. trans. under the general editorship of Strachey, James. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1984.
- Gane, Mike. Baudrillard: Critical and Fatal Theory. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Geldzahler, Henry. New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940-1970. London: Pall



Mall Press, 1969.

Glass, Philip. Opera on the Beach. London: Faber and Faber, 1987.

Greenberg, Clement. Art and Culture: Critical Essays. Boston: Beacon Press, 1961.

Glusberg, Jorge. The Art of Performance. New York: undated.

Goldberg, Roselee. Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present. London: Thames & Hudson, 1988.

Goldwater, Robert. What is Modern Sculpture? New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1969.

Hansen, Al. A Primer of Happenings and Time/Space Art. New York: Something Else Press, 1965.

Harre, Rom. Physical Being: A Theory for a Corporeal Psychology. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1991.

Harrison, Charles, and Paul Wood (eds.) Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

Henri, Adrian. Environments and Happenings. London: Thames and Hudson, 1974.

Hughes, Robert. The Shock of the New. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981.

Huizinga, J. Homo Ludens. New York: Beacon Press, 1955.

Jameson, Frederic. Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. London and New York: Verso, 1991.

Johnson, Ellen H. Modern Art and the Object: A century of changing attitudes. London: Thames and Hudson, 1976.

Johnson, Ellen H. (ed.) American Artists on Art from 1940 to 1980. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.

Kaprow, Allan. Assemblage, Environments and Happenings. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1966.

Kaprow, Allan. Some Recent Happenings. New York: Something Else Press, 1966.

Kaprow, Allan. Untitled Essay and other works. New York: Something Else Press, 1967.

Kaprow, Allan. Echo-logv. New York: D'Arc Press, 1975.

Kaprow, Allan. Rates of Exchange. New York: D'Arc Press, 1975.

Kaprow, Allan. Satisfaction. New York: M.L.D'Arc Gallery, 1976.

Kaye, Nick. Postmodernism and Performance. London, Macmillan, 1994.

Kirby, E.T. (ed.) Total Theatre. New York: Dutton, 1969.

Kirby, Michael. Happenings: An Illustrated Anthology. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1965.

Kirby, Michael. The Art of Time: Essays on the Avant-Garde. New York: Dutton, 1969.

- Kostelanetz, Richard. The Theatre of Mixed Means. New York: Pitman Publishing, 1968.
- Kostelanetz, Richard (ed.) Essaying Essays: Alternative Forms of Exposition. New York: Out of London Press, 1975.
- Kostelanetz, Richard (ed.) Conversing with Cage. New York: Limelight Editions, 1988.
- Krauss, Rosalind. Passages in Modern Sculpture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1977.
- Kroker, Arthur, and David Cook. The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper Aesthetics. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Kultermann, Udo. The New Sculpture: Environments and Assemblages. New York: Praeger, 1968.
- Kultermann, Udo. Art Events and Happenings. trans. John William Gabriel. London: Mathews Millar Dunbar, 1971.
- Langer, Susanne K. Philosophy in a New Key: A Study of the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1942.
- Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art developed from Philosophy in a New Key. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953.
- Lippard, Lucy R. Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.
- Lodge, David (ed.) 20th Century Literary Criticism: A Reader. London: Longman, 1972.
- Loeffler, Carl E. and Darlene Tong (eds.) Performance Anthology: Source Book for a Decade of California Performance Art. San Francisco: Contemporary Arts Press, 1980.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. Movements in Art since 1945. London: Thames and Hudson, 1969.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. Art in the Seventies. Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1980.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Differend: Phrases in Dispute. trans. G. Van den Abbeele. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1979.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge. trans. Regis Durand. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. The Lyotard Reader. Benjamin, Andrew (ed.) Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989.
- Marranca, Bonnie. The Theatre of Images. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977.
- Martin, Henry. An Introduction to George Brecht's Book of the Tumbler on Fire. Milan: 1978.
- Masheck, Joseph (ed.) Marcel Duchamp in Perspective. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.
- McNamara, Brooks, Jerry Rojo and Richard Schechner. Theatres, Spaces, Environments. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1975.

- Mondrian, Piet. The New Art - The New Life: The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian. Holzman, Harry and Martin S. James (eds.) Boston: 1986.
- Motherwell, Robert. Dada Painters and Poets. New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, 1951.
- Muller, Gregoire. The New Avant-Garde: Issues for the Art of the Seventies. London: Pall Mall Press, 1972.
- Nairne, Sandy, Geoff Dunlop and John Wyver. State of the Art: Ideas and Images in the 1980s. London: Chatto and Windus, 1987.
- Napier, David A. Foreign Bodies: Performance, Art, and Symbolic Anthropology. University of California Press, 1992.
- O'Pray, Michael (ed.) Andy Warhol Film Factory. London: British Film Institute, 1989.
- Pannenburg, Wolfhart. Jesus: God and Man. trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe. London: SCM Press Ltd, 1968.
- Papadakis, Andreas C. Dr (ed.) German Art Now. London: Academy Editions, 1989.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert. Postminimalism. New York: Out of London Press, Inc., 1977.
- Plato. The Republic. 2nd revised and expanded ed. trans. Desmond Lee. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Rainer, Yvonne. Yvonne Rainer: Work 1961-73. Halifax, Canada: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974.
- Readings, Bill. Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Redmond, James (ed.) Themes in Drama Vol.5: Drama and Religion. London, Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Reinelt, Janelle G. and R. Roach (eds.) Critical Theory and Performance. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992.
- Robins, Corinne. The Pluralist Era: American Art 1968 - 1981. New York: Harper and Row, 1984.
- Rose, Barbara. American Art since 1900: A Documentary Survey. New York: Praeger, 1967.
- Rosenberg, Harold. The Anxious Object: Art Today and its Audience. New York: Horizon Press, 1964.
- Sayre, Henry M. The Object of Performance: The American avant-garde since 1970. London: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Scarry, Elizabeth. The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Schechner, Richard. Environmental Theatre. New York: Hawthorn, 1973.
- Schechner, Richard. Essays on Performance Theory 1970-1976. New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1977.
- Schechner, R. Between Theatre and Anthropology. Philadelphia: University of

Pennsylvania Press, 1985.

- Schneemann, Carolee. More than Meat Joy. McPherson, Bruce (ed.) New York: Documentext, 1979.
- Shank, Theodore. American Alternative Theatre. London: Macmillan, 1982.
- Shyer, Laurence. Robert Wilson and his Collaborators. New York: Theatre Communications Group Inc, 1989.
- Silverman, Hugh J. (ed.) Postmodernism - Philosophy and the Arts. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall Inc, 1990.
- Sohm, H. (ed.) Happenings and Fluxus. Cologne: Koelnischer Kunstverein, 1970.
- Sontag, Susan. Against Interpretation and other essays. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1961.
- Sontag, Susan. On Photography. New York: Farrar, Straus Giroux, 1973.
- Stangos, Nikos (ed.) Concepts of Modern Art. revised and enlarged ed. (Penguin Books, 1974) London: Thames and Hudson, 1981.
- States, Bert O. Great Reckonings in Little Rooms: On the Phenomenology of Theater. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- Stearns, Robert (ed.) Robert Wilson: The Theatre of Images. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1984.
- Stein, Gertrude. Geography and Plays (1908-20). Boston: The Four Seas Company 1922, reissued New York: Something Else Press, 1968.
- Tisdall, Caroline. Beuys: Covote. Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 1976.
- Vergine, Lea. Il corpo come linguaggio. La "Body-art" e storie simili. Milan: Giampaola Prearo Editore, 1974.
- Wallis, Brian (ed.) Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation. Boston: David R Godine, Publisher, Inc, 1984.
- Wiegand, Wilfried, et al. Joseph Beuys: In Memoriam Joseph Beuys, Obituaries, Essays. trans. Timothy Nevill. Bonn: Inter Nationes, 1986.
- Wijers, Louwrien and Johan Pijnappel (eds.) Art meets Science and Spirituality in a changing economy. London: Art & Design, 1990.
- Wilson, Glenn. The psychology of the performing arts. London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Wollheim, Richard. Art and its objects: An Introduction to Aesthetics. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.
- Wright, Elizabeth. Psychoanalytic Criticism. London: Methuen & Co, 1984.
- Young, La Monte (ed.) An Anthology. New York: La Monte Young & Jackson Mac Low, 1963.

## EXHIBITION CATALOGUES

- Anon. Twentieth Century Sculpture: Process and Presence. New York: Whitney Museum at Philip Morris, 1983.

- Beuys, Joseph, and Caroline Tisdall. Richtkräfte '74. New York: René Block Gallery, 1975.
- John Brockman Associates. Intermedia '68. New York, 1968.
- Burden, Chris. Chris Burden: A Twenty Year Survey. California, Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1988.
- Craig-Martin, Michael. Minimalism. Liverpool: Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 1990.
- Crichton, Michael. Jasper Johns. New York: Harry N. Abrams & Whitney Museum of American Art, 1977.
- Compton, Michael, and David Sylvester (eds.) Robert Morris. London: Tate Gallery, 1971.
- Fairbrother, Trevor (ed.) Robert Wilson's Vision. New York: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston/Abrams, 1988.
- Galerie Isy Brachot, Brussels. Joseph Beuys. Brussels: Galerie Isy Brachot, 1989.
- Goossen, E. C. The Art of the Real. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1968.
- Institute of Contemporary Art, London. Art into Society, Society into Art. London: Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 1974.
- Kaprow, Allan, and Barbara Berman. Allan Kaprow. Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1967.
- Kunsthalle, Bern. When Attitudes Become Form. Bern: Kunsthalle, 1969.
- Licht, Ira (ed.) Bodyworks. Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1975.
- Licht, Jennifer. Spaces. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970.
- Luzern, Kunstmuseum. Vito Acconci. Lucern: Lucern Kunstmuseum, 1978.
- McShine, Kynaston. Primary Structures. New York: Jewish Museum, 1966.
- Marck, Jan van der. American Art: Third Quarter Century. Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1973.
- Mayor, D. Fluxshoe. Devon: Beau Geste Press, 1972.
- Michelson, Annette. Robert Morris. Washington DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC and the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1969.
- Morris, Robert. Robert Morris: Mirror Works 1961-78. New York: Leo Castelli Gallery, 1979.
- Morris, Robert. Robert Morris: The Felt Works. New York: Grey Art Gallery and Study Centre, 1989.
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Vito Acconci: A Retrospective 1969 to 1980. Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1980.
- Museum of Modern Art, Oxford. Joseph Beuys: The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland. Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1974.
- Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Ghent. Joseph Beuys: Tekeningen, Aquarellen, Goaches, Collages, Olieverven. Ghent: Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, 1977.

- Nesbitt, Judith (ed.) Joseph Beuys. Liverpool: Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 1993.
- Phillpot, Clive and Jon Hendricks (eds.) Fluxus: Selections from the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Collection. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1988.
- Rose, Barbara. A New Aesthetic. Washington DC: Washington Gallery of Modern Art, 1967.
- Rosenthal, Mark. Joseph Beuys: Blitzschlag mit Lichtschien auf Hirsch: Lightning with Stag in its Glare. trans. Max Wechsler and Jennifer Greitschus. Frankfurt am Main: 1991.
- Schellmann, Jorg (ed.) Joseph Beuys: Multiples (Catalogue Raisonné of Multiples and Prints 1965-1985). Munich and New York: Edition Schellmann, 1980.
- Seitz, William. The Art of Assemblage. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1961.
- Temkin, Ann, and Bernice Rose (eds.) Thinking is Form: The Drawings of Joseph Beuys. London: Thames and Hudson, 1993.
- Tisdall, Caroline. Joseph Beuys. New York and London: Thames and Hudson, 1979.
- Tucker, Marcia. Robert Morris. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1970.
- Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Joseph Beuys: Drawings. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1983.
- Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Eight Sculptors: the ambiguous image. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1966.
- Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. The Anxious Edge: Eight Artists. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1982.
- Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1969.

## ARTICLES

- Acconci, Vito, and Liza Bear. "Interview with Vito Acconci." Avalanche. Vol.6. Fall 1972.
- Acconci, Vito, and Robin White. "An interview with Vito Acconci." View. November 1979.
- Adams, Brooks. "Panel Discussion with Joseph Beuys." Arts Magazine. January 1980. pp.72-3.
- Adams, David. "Joseph Beuys (Occultism in avant-garde art: the case of Joseph Beuys; review article)." Art Journal. Vol.50. Spring 1991. pp.96-98.
- Adams, David. "Joseph Beuys: Pioneer of a Radical Ecology." Art Journal. Vol.51. Summer 1992. pp.26-34.
- Ak, Edit de, and W. Robinson. "Beuys: Art Encage." Art in America.

- November/December 1974. pp.76-79.
- Alenikoff, Frances. "Scenario: A Talk with Robert Wilson." Dance Scope. Vol.10 no.1. Fall/Winter 1975. pp.11-20.
- Ammann, Jean-Christophe. "A Talk - Joseph Beuys, Jannis Kounellis, Anselm Kiefer, Enzo Cucchi." Flash Art. Vol.128. May/June 1986. pp.36-39.
- Andre, M. "Joseph Beuys: Rene Block Gallery, Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York." Art News. Summer 1975. p 143.
- Anon. "Trend to the 'Anti-Art'." Newsweek. Vol.51 no.13. 31 March 1958 pp.94,96.
- Anon. "A poetic and evasive American 'Dream'." L'Unita. 29 April 1971.
- Anon. "The Talk of the Town: Einstein at the Met." The New Yorker. 6 December 1976. pp.99-100.
- Antin, David. "Art and Information: 1: Grey Paint, Robert Morris." Art News. Vol.65 no.2. April 1966. pp.22-24.
- Aragon, Louis. "An Open Letter to Andre Breton from Louis Aragon." trans. Linda Moses and Jean-Paul Lavergne. Performing Arts Journal. Spring 1976.
- Arens, Katherine. "Robert Wilson: Is Postmodern Performance Possible?" Theatre Journal. Vol.43. 1991. pp.14-40.
- Armstrong, Gordon S. "Images in the interstice: The Phenomenal Theatre of Robert Wilson." Modern Drama. Vol.31. January 1988.
- Aronson, Arnold. "Wilson/Knowles' The \$ value of man." The Drama Review. Vol.19 no.3 [T67]. Fall 1975. pp.106-110.
- Auslander, Philip. "Holy Theatre and Catharsis." Theatre Research International. Vol.9. Spring 1984. pp.16-29.
- Auslander, Philip. "Toward a concept of the political in postmodern theatre." Theatre Journal. Vol.39 no.1. 1987. pp.20-34.
- Baker, Rob. "The Mystery Is in the Surface." Theatre Crafts. Vol.19 no.8. October 1985. pp.22-3,88-.
- Baker, Rob. "Einstein On the Beach: Times Three." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. p17.
- Ballatore, Sandy. "Beuys: Myth, Monster or Messiah?" Artweek. 14 January 1975. pp.1-2.
- Banes, Sally. "The Art of Meredith Monk." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.III no.1. Spring/Summer 1978. pp.3-18.
- Banes, Sally. "Democracy's Body: Judson Dance Theatre and Its legacy." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.V PAJ 14 (no.2.) 1981. pp.98-107.
- Banham, Reyner. "Art in London: It was SRO - And a Disaster." The New York Times. 23 May 1971.
- Baracks, Barbara. "Einstein on the Beach." Artforum. March 1977. pp.30-36.
- Barnes, Clive. "Must there be a story?" The New York Times. 14 March 1971.
- Barnes, Clive. "Stage: Deafman Glance." The New York Times. 7 March 1971.

- Bear, Liza. "Chris Burden...Back to you." Avalanche. May/June 1974. pp.12-13.
- Bear, Liza, and Willoughby Sharp. "Chris Burden: The Church of Human Energy." Avalanche. no.8. Summer/Fall 1974. pp.54-61.
- Belz, Carl. "Boston:Joseph Beuys' American Debut." Art in America. Vol. 60 September/October 1972. pp.102-3.
- Beuys, Joseph. "Joseph Beuys - Four Pages." Studio International. September 1970. pp.90-93.
- Beuys, Joseph. "Joseph Beuys talking at Documenta 5." Avalanche. Vol.5 Summer 1972. pp.12-15.
- Beuys, Joseph. "Art is the only power to free humankind from all repression." Avalanche. May 1974. pp.4-7.
- Beuys, Joseph, and Umberto Allemandi. "Joseph Beuys Superstar." trans. Dorina Morawetz. Bolaffi Arte. June 1974.
- Beuys, Joseph, and Rob Con. "Joseph Beuys in conversation with Rob Con." Primary Sources. no.1. 1979. pp.14-15.
- Blok, C. "Minimal Art at the Hague." Art International. Vol.12 no.5. May 1968. pp.18-24.
- Borden, Lizzie. "Joseph Beuys:Drawings" Artforum. April 1973. pp.76-7.
- Bourden, David. "Art: Robert Morris." The Village Voice. 24 December 1964.
- Bourden, David. "Art: The Artist as Sex Object." New York Magazine. 16 September 1974. p56.
- Bourden, David. "Beuys will be Beuys. Beckmann is Beckmann." The Village Voice. 28 April 1975. p98.
- Brett, Guy. "Robert Morris: heavy-weight organiser." The Times. 28 April 1971.
- Brown, Trisha, and Douglas Dunn. "Dialogue: Trish Brown Douglas Dunn On Dance." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.1 no.2. Fall 1976. pp.76-83.
- Buchloh, Benjamin H. D. "Beuys: The Twilight of the Idol: Preliminary notes for a critique" Artforum. Vol.18. January 1980. pp.35-41.
- Buchloh, Benjamin H. D., Rosalind Krauss and Annette Michelson. "Joseph Beuys at the Guggenheim." October. no.12. Spring 1980. pp.3-21.
- Burckhardt, Jacqueline, and Bice Curiger. "The Weight of a grain of dust." Parkett. Vol.16. 1988. pp.111-21.
- Burden, Chris. "Chris Burden." Flash Art. Vol.56/7. June/July 1975. p40.
- Burden, Chris. "Garcon, Shadow, Natural Habitat [and others]." Flash Art. 1978.
- Burden, Chris. "The Curse of Big Job." High Performance. Vol.2 no.1. March 1979. pp.2-3.
- Burden, Chris. "Coals to Newcastle." High Performance. Vol.2 no.1. March 1979. pp.12-13.
- Burden, Chris. "Artist's Notes." High Performance. Summer 1980. p18.



- Burden, Chris, and Jim Moisan. "Border Crossing (Chris Burden questioned by Jim Moisan)." High Performance. Vol.2 no.1. March 1979. pp.5-11.
- Burnham, Jack. "Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art." Artforum. Vol.8 no.6. February 1970. pp.37-43.
- Burnham, Jack. "Robert Morris: Retrospective in Detroit" Artforum. Vol.8 no.7. March 1970. pp.67-75.
- Burnham, Jack. "Objects and Ritual: Towards a working ontology of art." Arts Magazine. December-January 1973. pp.28-32.
- Burnham, Linda. "Per/For/Mance: American Artists in Italy." High Performance. Summer 1980. pp.17-18.
- Butterfield, Jan and Chris Burden. "Through the Night Softly." Arts Magazine. Vol.49. December-January 1975. pp.68-71.
- Cage, John, Richard Foreman and Richard Kostelanetz. "dialogue:Art in the Culture." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV no.1/2. 1979. pp.70-84.
- Cage, John, Michael Kirby and Richard Schechner. "An Interview with John Cage." Tulane Drama Review. Winter 1965. pp.50-72.
- Cage, John and Robin White. "An interview with John Cage." View. April 1978.
- Calas, Nicholas. "Bodyworks and purposes." Artforum. Vol.16 no.5. January 1978. pp.33-37.
- Carr, C. "Unspeakable Practices, Unnatural Acts: The Taboo art of Karen Finley." The Village Voice. 17 June 1986. p24.
- Carr, C. "This is only a test: Chris Burden." Artforum. September 1989. pp.117-21.
- Castle, Ted. "Carolee Schneemann: The woman who uses her body as her art." Artforum. November 1980. pp.64-70.
- Cavaliere, Barbara. "Chris Burden." Arts Magazine June 1979. p4.
- Celant, Germano. "Vito Acconci." Domus. no.509. April 1972. pp.54-56.
- Chalupecky, Jindrich. "Art and Sacrifice." Flash Art. February-April 1978. pp.35-37.
- Chaudhuri, Una. "When's the play? Time and the theory of Drama." Theater. Summer/Fall 1991. pp.46-51.
- Chin, Daryl. "Contemplating the Navel: The use and abuse of video art." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV PAJ 10/11 (nos.1/2.) 1979. pp.62-69.
- Clothier, Peter. "Chris Burden: The artist as hero." Flash Art. January-February 1980. pp49-50.
- Collins, Jim. "Reviews: Chris Burden, Ronald Feldman Gallery." Artforum. May 1974. p12.
- Copeland, Roger. "Postmodern Dance Postmodern Architecture Postmodernism." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.VII no.1. 1983. pp.27-43.
- Cox, Anthony. "Instructive Auto-Destruction." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1986. pp.16-19.

- Croghan, L.A. "Beuys, Joseph." Current Biography. July 1980. pp.3-5.
- Curtiss, Thomas Quinn. "Bob Wilson Spectacle, 'Einstein on the Beach'." International Herald Tribune. 31 July 1976.
- Dakin, Sue. "Insanity and Death." High Performance. Winter 1981-82. pp.26-29.
- Davis, Douglas. "Pied Piper." Newsweek. 1 May 1972. p87.
- Deak, Frantisek. "Robert Wilson." The Drama Review. Vol.18 no.2 [T62]. June 1974. pp.67-80.
- Demarco, Richard. "Conversations with artists: Richard Demarco interviews Joseph Beuys, London (March 1982)." Studio International. Vol.195. September 1982. pp.46-7.
- Demarco, Richard. "Obituary." Studio International. Vol.199. March 1986. pp.54-55.
- Denby, Edwin. "You never heard of a silent opera?" The New York Times. 9 December 1973. p10 [sec.D].
- Dewey, Ken. "X-Ings." Tulane Drama Review. Winter 1965. pp.216-223.
- Dunning, William V. "The Concept of Self and Postmodern Painting: constructing a Post-Cartesian viewer." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.49 no. Fall 1991. pp.331-36.
- Dry, Graham. "Joseph Beuys, Objekte." The Burlington Magazine. March 1980. pp.221-2.
- Falaise, Maxime de la and Nenna Eberstadt. "Einstein at the Met." Andy Warhol's Interview. February 1977. pp.27-30.
- Finter, Helga "Experimental Theatre and Semiology of Theatre: The Theatricalisation of Voice." [trans. Walker, E.A & Gargal, Kathryn] Modern Drama. January 1983. pp501-17.
- Flakes, Susan. "Robert Wilson's Einstein on the Beach." The Drama Review. Vol.20 no.4 [T72]. December 1976. pp.69-82.
- Foreman, Richard. "The Life and Times of Sigmund Freud." The Village Voice. 1 January 1970.
- Foreman, Richard. "How to write a play (in which i am really telling myself how, but if you are the right one I am telling you how, too)." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.I no.2. Fall 1976. pp.84-92.
- Forte, Jeannie. "Women's Performance Art: Feminism and Postmodernism." Theatre Journal. Vol.40 no.2. Spring 1988. pp.217-35.
- Fox, Terry. "Terry Fox (interview with Liza Bear)." Avalanche. 1974.
- Frank, Peter. "Joseph Beuys, the most fascinating of enigmas." Art News. Vol.72. April 1973. p51.
- Frank, Peter. "Auto-art: Self-indulgent? And How!" Art News. September 1976. pp.43-48.
- Frank, Peter. "Performance Art in New York: Approaching the Eighties." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV no 1/2. 1979. pp.125-28.

- Frenais, Rob La. "The Civil Warrior." Performance. Vol.38. December-February 1986. pp.37-41.
- Fried, Michael. "New York Letter." Art International. Vol.7 no.2. February 1963. p64.
- Fried, Michael. "Shape as Form: Frank Stella's New Paintings." Artforum. Vol.V no.3. November 1966. pp.18-27.
- Friedman, Martin. "Robert Morris: Polemics and Cubes." Art International. Vol.10 no.10. December 1966. pp.23-24.
- Galligan, Gregory. "Oskar Schlemmer: Divining the human ideal." Arts Magazine. Vol.61. December 1986. pp.50-52.
- Galloway, David. "Beuys and Warhol: Aftershocks." Art in America. Vol.76. July 1988. pp.112-23.
- Galloway, David D. "Report from Germany (Von hier aus: Trade Fair Complex, Dusseldorf)." Art in America. Vol.73. March 1985. pp.23-27.
- Gambrell, Jamey. "Disarming Metaphors." Art in America. Vol.72. January 1984. pp.83-85.
- Geldzahler, Henry. "Happenings: Theatre by Painters." Hudson Review. Vol.XVIII no.4. Winter 1965. pp.581-86.
- George, David. "On ambiguity: Towards a Post-Modern Performance Theory." Theatre Research International. Spring 1989. pp.71-85.
- Gibson, Eric. "Art: The Real Robert Morris." The New Criterion. March 1985. pp.55-56.
- Gibson, Eric. "Was Minimalist Art a Political Movement?" The New Criterion. Vol.5 no.9. May 1987. pp.59-64.
- Gilbert-Rolfe, Jeremy. "Robert Morris: The complication of exhaustion." Artforum. September 1974. pp.45-48.
- Glaser, Bruce, Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein et al. "Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol. A Discussion." Artforum. Vol.4 no.6. February 1966. pp.22-3.
- Glass, Philip. "Notes on Einstein on the Beach." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.II no.3. Winter 1978. pp.63-70.
- Glueck, Grace. "A feeling for felt." The New York Times. 28 April 1968 p.D35.
- Goldberg, Roselee. "Space as Praxis." Studio International. Vol.190 no.977. September-October 1975. pp.136-142.
- Goossen, E. C. "The Artist Speaks: Robert Morris." Art in America. Vol. 58 no.3. May-June 1970. pp.104-11.
- Gosling, Nigel. "The 'have-a-go' show." The Observer Review. 2 May 1971.
- Greenberg, Clement. "After Abstract Expressionism." Art International. Vol.VI no.8. October 1962. pp.24-32.
- Gruen, John. "Is it a Play? An Opera? No it's a Wilson." The New York Times. 16 March 1975. p7.

- Gussow, Mel. "Stage View: 'Einstein' Beckons Us to the Fourth Dimension." The New York Times. 23 December 1984. p3 [sec.H].
- Handy, Ellen. "Chris Burden." Arts Magazine. Vol.58. December 1983. p39.
- Hansen, Al. "Life in Destruction." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.32-35.
- Harris, Dale. "Robert Wilson's Epic Vision." Connoisseur. April 1984. pp.100-105.
- Hassan, Ihab. "The Question of Postmodernism." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.VI PAJ 16 (no.1.) 1981. pp.30-37.
- Hein, Hilde. "Performance as an aesthetic category." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.XXVIII no.3. Spring 1970. pp.381-86.
- Hess, T. B. "The Germans are here! The Germans are here!" New York Magazine. 5 May 1975. pp.98-99.
- Hess, Thomas B. "Editorial: The Artist as a Company-Man." Art News. Vol.63 no.6. October 1964. p19.
- Higgins, Dick. "The New Humanism." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV PAJ 10/11 (nos.1/2.) 1979. pp.23-32.
- Highwater, Jamake. "Einstein on the Beach: A Primal Drumming." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. p15.
- Hindman, James T. "Self-Performance: Allan Kaprow's Activities." The Drama Review. Vol.23 no.1 [T81]. Spring 1979. pp.95-102.
- Hoffman, Fred. "Chris Burden's Humanism." Artweek. 27 October 1979. pp.1,16.
- Horvitz, Robert. "Chris Burden." Artforum. Vol.14. May 1976. pp.24-31.
- Houedard, Dom Sylvester. "Aesthetics of the Death Wish." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.48-9.
- Howell, John. "Art Performance: New York." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.I no.3. Winter 1977. pp.28-39.
- Howell, John. "Interview: Kenneth King Dance Plus." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.III no.2. Fall 1978. pp.16-24.
- Howell, John. "Kenneth King: Dancer/Choreographer." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.III no.2. Fall 1978. pp.12-15.
- Howell, John. "interview:reminiscences of a dance critic (Edwin Denby)." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV no.1/2. 1979. pp.52-61.
- Howell, John. "Forum: What a Legend Becomes." Artforum. March 1985. p90.
- Hughes, Robert. "The Noise of Beuys." Time. 12 November 1979. pp.89-90.
- Hughes-Hallet, Lucy. "Peace on Earth? Chris Burden's Investigations." Performance Magazine. no.62. November 1990. pp.16-25.
- Huyssen, Andreas. "Mapping the Postmodern." New German Critique. Vol.33. Fall 1984. pp.5-52.
- Jappe, Georg. "A Joseph Beuys Primer." trans. David Britt Studio International. Vol.182. September 1971. pp.65-9.

- Jappe, Georg. "The Beuys Example." Studio International. Vol.184. no.950. December 1972. pp.228-29.
- Jappe, Georg. "Not just a few are called, but everyone: Joseph Beuys in discussion with Georg Jappe." trans. John Wheelwright. Studio International. Vol.184. no.950. December 1972. pp.226-28.
- Jock, Abra. "The dancer as masochist." Dance Research Journal. Vol.19. Winter 1987. pp.33-39.
- Johnston, Jill. "[review: Happening at Reuben Gallery]." Art News. Vol.60 no.4. Summer 1961. pp.61-2.
- Jonas, Joan. "View [Interview by Robin White]." View. 1979.
- Jones, Robert. "Robert Wilson's 'Einstein' returns to the stage." The New York Times. 2 December 1984. pp.5,24.
- Jouffrey, Alain. "[review of *Deafman Glance*]." Les Lettres Francaises. Vol.1388 2 June 1971.
- Jowitt, Deborah. "A parade, never concluding." The Village Voice. 4 March 1971.
- Jowitt, Deborah. "What is  $E=MC^2$  to a Dreamer?" The Village Voice. 20 December 1976.
- Kaprow, Allan. "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock." Art News. Vol. 57 no.6. October 1958. pp.24-26,55-57.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Happenings in the New York Scene." Art News. Vol.60 no.3. May 1961. pp.36-9,58-62.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Impurity." Art News. Vol.61 no.9. January 1963. pp.30-3 52-55.
- Kaprow, Allan. "A Service for the Dead." Art International. Vol.7 no.1. 25 January 1963. pp.46-7.
- Kaprow, Allan. "An Artist's story of a Happening." The New York Times. 6 October 1963. p17.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Two Happenings." City Lights Journal. Vol.2. 1964. pp.255-59.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Should the Artist become a man of the world?" Art News. Vol.63 no.6. October 1964. pp.34-7,58.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Calling." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.203-11.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Experimental Art." Art News. Vol.65 no.1. March 1966. pp.60-3,77-82.
- Kaprow, Allan. "The Happenings are Dead - Long live the Happenings." Artforum. Vol.IV no.7. March 1966. pp.36-9.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Letter to the editor." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.4. Summer 1966. pp.281-3.
- Kaprow, Allan. "The Best Use of the Past (and Present) is Misuse." statement printed without title in "Jackson Pollock: An Artist's Symposium, Part 1." Art News. Vol.66 no.2. April 1967. pp.32-33, 59-61.

- Kaprow, Allan. "Self-Service: a Happening." The Drama Review. Spring 1968. pp.160-164.
- Kaprow, Allan. "The Shape of the Art Environment: How antiform is 'Anti Form'?" Artforum. no.6. Summer 1968. pp.32-33.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Education of the Un-Artist Part 1." Art News. February 1970. pp.28-31,66-67.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Education of the Un-Artist Part 2." Art News. May 1971. pp.34-9,62-3.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Education of the Un-Artist Part 3." Art in America. January-February 1974. pp.85-91.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Video Art: Old Wine, New Bottle." Artforum. June 1974. pp.46-49.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Non-Theatrical Performance." Artforum. May 1976. pp.45-51.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Participation Performance." Artforum. March 1977. pp.24-9.
- Kaprow, Allan. "Tail Wagging Dog." The Act. Vol.2. no.1 1991. pp.10-12.
- Kaprow, Allan and Richard Schechner. "Extensions in Time and Space: an interview with Allan Kaprow." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.153-159.
- Kaye, Nick. "Something Material." Performance. no.54. June-July 1988. pp.17-18.
- Kaye, Nick. "Breaking the Frame." Performance. no.56/57. Summer 1989. pp.23-5.
- Kaye, Nick. "The Aesthetics of Denial." Mediamatic. Vol.4 no.4. Summer 1990. pp.198-211.
- Kaye, Nick. "Postmodernism and Performance." Music Theatre Dance. Vol.1. Winter 1990. pp.3-11.
- Kingsley, April. "Einstein on the Beach: What You See is What You See." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. pp.15-6.
- Kirby, E. T. "The Shamanistic Origins of Popular Entertainments." The Drama Review. Vol.18 no.1. Spring 1974. pp.5-15.
- Kirby, Michael. "The New Theatre." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.23-43.
- Kirby, Michael. "Allan Kaprow's 'Eat'." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.44-9.
- Kisselgoff, Anna. "Robert Wilson Play, 'Deafman' opening." The New York Times. 25 February 1971.
- Kleb, William. "Art Performance: San Francisco." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.1 no.3. Winter 1977. pp.40-50.
- Kozloff, Max. "9 in a Warehouse." Artforum. Vol.7 no.6. February 1969. pp.38-42.
- Kozloff, Max. "Pygmalion Reversed." Artforum. November 1975. pp.30-7.
- Kramer, Hilton. "Beuys Celebration at Dia: Don't mention the War!" The New

York Observer. 6 April 1992. pp.1,27.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism." October. no.1. Spring 1976. pp.50-64.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Notes on the Index: '70s Art in America." October. no.3. Spring 1977. pp.68-81.

Kuspit, Donald. "Joseph Beuys: The body of the artist." Artforum. Vol.29. Summer 1991. pp.80-86.

Kuspit, Donald B. "Beuys: Fat,Felt and Alchemy." Art in America. Vol.68. May 1980. pp.78-79.

LaCoste, Michel Concil. "The Heritage of Painting in "Deafman Glance."" Le Monde. 1971.

Lacy, Suzanne. "Made for TV: California Performance in Mass Media." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.VI PAJ 17 (no.2.) 1982. pp.52-61.

Langworthy, Douglas. "'Listen to the pictures" Robert Wilson & German Theatre Criticism." Theater. December 1991. pp.35-40.

Larson, Kay. "Joseph Beuys: Shaman, sham, or one of the most brilliant artists of our time." Art News. Vol.79. April 1980. pp.126-27.

Lebel, Jean-Jaques. "On the Necessity of Violation." The Drama Review. Vol.13 no.1. [T41]. Fall 1968. pp.89-105.

Lehmann, Hans-Thies. "Robert Wilson: Scenographer." Parkett. Vol.16. 1988. pp.66-9.

Levin, Kim. "Art: Beuys: The Last Work." The Village Voice. 18 February 1986. p95.

Levy, Mark. "The Shaman is a gifted artist (Shamanism in the work of Yves Klien, Joseph Beuys, Mary Beth Edelson, Karen Finley)." High Performance. Vol.11. Fall 1988. pp.54-61.

LeWitt, Sol. "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art." Artforum. Vol.5 no.10. June 1967. pp.79-83.

Lindenberger, Herbert. "From Opera to Postmodernity: On Genre, Style, Institutions." in Perloff, Marjorie (ed.) Postmodern Genres. London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988. pp.38-53.

Lipman, Samuel. "Einstein's Long March to Brooklyn." The New Criterion. Vol.3 no.6. February 1985. pp.15-24.

Lippard, Lucy R. "Rejective Art." Art International. Vol.10 no.8. October 1966. pp.33-37.

Lippard, Lucy R. "Eros Presumptive." The Hudson Review. Vol.20. Spring 1967 pp.91-99.

Lippard, Lucy R. "Escalation in Washington." Art International. Vol.12 no.1. January 1968. pp.42-46.

Lippard, Lucy R. "Pains and pleasures of rebirth: Womens' Body Art." Art in America. May/June 1976. pp.73-81.

Lyotard, Jean-François. "Presenting the unrepresentable: The sublime." Artforum. April 1982. pp.64-69.

- Lyotard, Jean-François. "The Sublime and the avant-garde." trans. L.Liebmann, G.Bennington, & M.Hobson Paragraph. no.6. 1985. pp.1-18.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. "The Differend, The Referent and The Proper Name." Diacritics. Vol.14 no.3. 1984. pp.4-14.
- McDarragh, F.W. "Art." The Village Voice. 13th September 1962. p9.
- McDonagh, Donald. "Unexpected Assemblage!" Dance Magazine. June 1965. pp.42-44, 78.
- McEvilley, Thomas. "Marina Abramovic/Ulay." Artforum. September 1983. pp.52-55.
- Mackintosh, Alastair. "Beuys in Edinburgh." Art and Artists. November 1970. p10.
- Marck, Jan van der. "George Brecht: An art of multiple implications." Art in America. July 1974.
- Marioni, Tom. "Terry Fox: Himself." Art and Artists. Vol.7 no.10. January 1973. pp.38-41.
- Marzorati, Gerald. "Beuys will be Beuys." The Soho Weekly News. 1 November 1979. pp.8-9.
- Mattick, Paul Jr. "Aesthetics and Anti-Aesthetics in the visual arts." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.51 no.2. Spring 1993. pp.253-59.
- Mayer, Rosemary. "Performance and Experience." Arts Magazine. December/January 1973. pp.33-6.
- Mayer, Rosemary. "Language and Visions." Arts Magazine. September/October 1973. pp.65-66.
- Mazars, Pierre. "Deafman Glance." Le Figaro. 20 May 1971.
- Menna, Filiberto and Alberto Boatto. "Buri...and Fontano." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.28-31.
- Meyer, Rosemary. "Performance and Experience." Arts Magazine. 1973.
- Meyer, Ursula. "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare: Joseph Beuys: Actions." Art News. Vol.68. January 1970. pp.54-57, 71.
- Michelson, Annette. "An Aesthetics of Transgression." in Robert Morris. Washington DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC and the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1969.
- Morgan, Robert C. "Who was Joseph Beuys?" High Performance. Vol.9 no.1. 1986. pp.20-26.
- Morgan, Robert C. "Joseph Beuys: ideas and actions (Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York; exhibit)." Arts Magazine. Vol.63. March 1989. pp.100-101.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Dance." Tulane Drama Review. Winter 1965. pp.179-86.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 1." Artforum. Vol.4 no.6. February 1966. pp.42-4.
- Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 2." Artforum. Vol.5 no.2. October



1966. pp.20-3.

Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 3: Notes and Nonsequiturs." Artforum. Vol.5 no.10. June 1967. pp.24-29.

Morris, Robert. "Anti Form." Artforum. Vol.6 no.8. April 1968. pp.33-5.

Morris, Robert. "Notes on Sculpture, Part 4: Beyond Objects." Artforum. Vol.7 no.8. April 1969. pp.50-54.

Morris, Robert. "Some Notes on the Phenomenology of Making: The Search for the Motivated." Artforum. Vol.10 no.8. April 1970. pp.62-66.

Morris, Robert. "Some Splashes in the Ebb Tide." Artforum. Vol.11 no. 6 February 1973. pp.42-49.

Morris, Robert. "Three folds in the Fabric and Four Autobiographical Asides as Allegories (or Interruptions)." Art in America. Vol.77 no.11. November 1989. pp.142-51.

Nelson, Steve. "Redecorating the fourth wall: Environmental theatre today." The Drama Review. Vol.33 no.T123 (no.3.) Fall 1989. pp.72-94.

Nemser, Cindy. "Art Criticism and Perceptual Research." College Art Journal. Spring 1970. pp.326-29.

Nemser, Cindy. "An Interview with Vito Acconci." Arts Magazine. March 1971. pp.20-23.

Nemser, Cindy. "Subject-Object Body Art." Arts Magazine. September 1971. pp.38-42.

Neugass, Fritz. "Düsseldorf: Artists and Students rally to Beuys." Art News. Vol.72. February 1973. p77.

O'Dell, Kathy. "The Performance artist as masochistic woman." Arts Magazine. Vol.62. Summer 1988. pp.96-98.

O'Doherty, Brian. "Art: Environment: Words' Exploits Law of Chance." The New York Times. 15 September 1962. p22.

O'Doherty, Brian. "Minus Plato." Art and Artists. Vol.1. September 1966. pp.10-11.

O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space Part 1." Artforum. March 1976. pp.24-30.

O'Doherty, Brian. "Inside the White Cube: Part II: The eye and the spectator." Artforum. April 1976. pp.26-34.

Oldenburg, Claes. "Fotodeath." Tulane Drama Review. Winter 1965. pp.84-93.

Oliva, Achille B. "A Score by Joseph Beuys: We are the revolution." Domus. December 1971.

Oliver, Cordelia. "Arts Guardian: Napoleon in a Scottish pond." The Guardian. 18 August 1970. p8.

Owens, Craig. "The Allegorical Impulse - Part 2." October. no.13. Winter 1980. pp.64-80.

Owens, Craig. "'Einstein on the Beach': The Primacy of Metaphor." October. no.4. Fall 1977. pp.21-32.

- Perreault, John. "A Minimal Future? Union-Made." Arts Magazine. Vol.41 no.5. March 1967. pp.26-31.
- Perrault, John. "Pulling out the Rug." The Village Voice. May 16 1968. pp.14-15.
- Perreault, John. "Cockroach Art." The Village Voice. 8 April 1971. pp.21,23.
- Perreault, John. "[Acconci review]." The Village Voice. 23 September 1971.
- Perreault, John. "Beuys and Coyote: An eerie duet." The Village Voice. 6 June 1974. pp.41-42,44.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert. "Theater of the Conceptual: Autobiography and Myth." Artforum. Vol.12 no.2. October 1973. pp.40-46.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert. "Vito Acconci and the Conceptual Performance." Artforum. April 1972. pp.47-49.
- Pincus-Witten, Robert L. "[Newport Harbour Arts Museum, California, exhibition]." Art in America. 1988.
- Plagens, Peter. "Site Wars." Art in America. January 1982. pp.90-98.
- Pluchart, Franciose. "Fire Sermons." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.24-27.
- Pluchart, Francois. "Body Art." Artitudes. no.1. (Paris) 1971.
- Pluchart, Francois. "Acconci's Performances." Artitudes. no.2. (Paris)1972.
- Pluchart, Francois. "Risk as the practice of thought." Flash Art. February-April 1978. pp.39-40.
- Poirot-Delpech, Bertrand. "At the Nancy Festival - From Spanish Reality to American imagination." Le Monde. 25 April 1971. trans. unknown.
- Price, Jonathan. "Listening to Joseph Beuys: A Parable of Dialogue." Art News. Vol.73. Summer 1974. pp.50-52.
- Propokoff, Stephen S. "Between Object and Environment." Art and Artists. Vol.4 no.6. September 1969. pp.16-17.
- Quadri, Franco. "Robert Wilson: It's about time." Artforum. October 1984. pp.76-82.
- Rabkin, Gerald. "Einstein on the Beach: Beached." Soho Weekly News. 2 December 1976. p17.
- Reise, Barbara. "Untitled 1969: a footnote on art and minimal style hood." Studio International. Vol.177 no.910. April 1969. pp.166-72.
- Rickey, Carrie. "The reason for the neutron bomb." Flash Art. June/July 1979. p43.
- Rickey, Carrie. "Where the Beuys are." The Village Voice. 26 November 1979. p99.
- Rickey, Carrie. "Joseph Beuys, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts." Artforum. February 1980. p95.
- Robbins, Eugenia S. "Performing Art." Art in America. Vol.54 no.4. July/August 1966. pp.107-11.

- Robinson, Jenefer. "The eliminability of Artistic Acts." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.36. Fall 1977. pp.81-94.
- Robinson, Walter. "Obituary." Art in America. Vol.74. March 1986. p182.
- Rockwell, John. "Music:'Einstein' returns briefly." The New York Times. 17 December 1984. p13 [sec.C].
- Rockwell, John. "The Death and Life of Minimalism." The New York Times. 21 December 1986. pp.1,29 [sec.2].
- Rogoff, Gordon. "Time, Wilson, and what a play should do." Theater. Summer/Fall 1991. pp.52-53.
- Rose, Barbara. "ABC Art." Art in America. Vol.53 no.5. October/November 1965. pp.57-69.
- Rosenthal, Rachel. "Performance and the Masochist tradition." High Performance. Winter 1981-82. pp.22-25.
- Sainer, Arthur. "Worms, apes, eyes, angels, ladies, fish." The Village Voice. 4 March 1971.
- Saltz, David Z. "How to do things on stage." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.49 no.1. Winter 1991. pp.31-45.
- Sargent, David. "Einstein on the Beach: The Met will dance to a mysterious tune." The Village Voice. 22 November 1976. pp.52-3,55.
- Schechner, Richard. "Happenings." Tulane Drama Review. Vol.10 no.2. Winter 1965. pp.229-32.
- Schechner, Richard. "The end of Humanism." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV PAJ 10/11 (nos.1/2.) 1979. pp.9-22.
- Schechner, Richard. "The Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-Garde (I)." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.V PAJ 14 (no.2.) 1981. pp.48-63.
- Schechner, Richard. "The Decline and Fall of the (American) Avant-Garde (II)." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.V PAJ 15 (no.3.) 1981. pp.9-19.
- Schjeldahl, Peter. "Art: How German Was He?" The Village Voice. 23 June 1992. p97.
- Schneede, Uwe M. "Art: Relics of the Shaman - Big Beuys Retrospective in Berlin." Kultur Chronik. no.3 1988. pp.4-8.
- Schwartz, Ellen. "Vito Acconci: I want to put the viewer on shaky ground." Art News. Summer 1981. pp.93-99.
- Searle, Judith. "How long does it take to peel a red onion?" The New York Times. 12 November 1972. pp.1,5 [sec.D].
- Seckler, Dorothy Gees. "The Audience is his Medium!" Art in America. Vol.51. no.2 April 1963. pp.62-7.
- Sharp, Willoughby. "An Interview with Joseph Beuys." Artforum. Vol.8. December 1969. pp.40-47.
- Siegel, Marcia B. "A theatre of the mind's eye." Sunday Herald Traveller. 21 March 1971.
- Siegel Marcia B. "'Einstein on the Beach': How to Build a Cloud" Soho Weekly

News. 21 February 1976 pp.16-7.

Simmer, Bill. "Robert Wilson and therapy." The Drama Review. Vol.20 no.1 [T69]. Winter 1976. pp.99-110.

Simmer, Bill. "Actress from Iowa: Sue Sheehy." The Drama Review. Vol.20 no.3 [T71]. September 1976. pp.67-74.

Sircello, Guy. "How is a theory of the sublime possible?" Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. Vol.51 no.4. Fall 1993. pp.541-50.

Smith, Roberta. "Rene Block Gallery, New York, Coyote." Artforum. September 1974. pp.74-75.

Stephano, Effie. "Image Changes: Interview with Vito Acconci." Art and Artists. Vol.8. February 1974. pp.24-27.

Stevens, Mark. "Art: Art's Medicine Man." Newsweek. 12 November 1979. pp.76-7.

Stoddart, Hugh. "Chris Burden." Performance. no.10. pp.13-4,18.

Storr, Robert. "Beuys's Boys." Art in America. Vol.76. March 1988. pp.96-103, 167.

Tisdall, Caroline. "Jimmy Boyle/Joseph Beuys: A dialogue." Studio International. Vol.191. March-April 1976. pp.144-145.

Tisdall, Caroline. "Coyote: I Like America and America like me: One week's performance on the occasion of the opening of the René Block Gallery, New York, May 1974." Studio International. vol 192 July-August 1976 pp 36-40.

Tisdall, Caroline. "Frankfurt: The Beuys Class." Studio International. January-February 1977. p29.

Todorov, Tzvetan. "Some approaches to Russian Formalism." 20th Century Studies. December 1972.

Tomkins, Calvin. "Time to Think: Profile of Robert Wilson." The New Yorker. 13 January 1973. pp.38-62.

Vanden Heuvel, Michael. "Complementary Spaces: Realism, Performance and a New Dialogics of Theatre." Theatre Journal. Vol.44. 1992. pp.47-58.

Vostell, Wolf. "Wolf Vostell." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.8-9.

Vostell, Wolf. "dé-coll-age." Art and Artists. Vol.1 no.5. August 1966. pp.10-11.

Wetzsteon, Ross. "Mounting Einstein: There's no business like the Avant-Garde Business." The Village Voice. 6 December 1976. pp.113-5.

Wilson, Robert. "...I thought I was hallucinating." The Drama Review. Vol.21 no.4 [T76]. December 1977. pp.75-78.

Wilson, Robert. "I was sitting on my patio this guy appeared I thought I was hallucinating." Performing Arts Journal. Vol.IV PAJ 10/11 (no.1-2.) 1979. pp.200-218.

Wilson, William. "Hard Questions and Soft Answers." Art News. vol.68 no.7. November 1969. pp26-29.

Winterton, Bradley. "Paris: The Theatre of Trance." Time Out. 18 June 1971. p34.

## SPECIAL ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

"Vito Acconci" Avalanche. no.6. Fall 1972.

SPECIAL ISSUE. "Censorship 1." Art Journal 1991.

SPECIAL ISSUE. "Censorship 2." Art Journal 1992.

## LP RECORDS

Byrne, David. Music for "The Knee Plays". ECM 25022-1. 1985.

Glass, Philip. Music in 12 Parts: Parts 1 & 2. Virgin CA2010. 1974.

Glass, Philip. Einstein on the Beach. CBS M4 38875. 1978.

## VIDEO TAPES & FILMS

Abramovic, Marina and Ulay. The Lovers: The Great Wall Walk. 16mm Film. The Amphis Foundation in association with Channel Four Television and NOS Television colour: 52mins, 1988-1989.

Abramovic, Marina and Ulay. Performance Anthology (17 performances 1976-1980). sound, b&w/colour. 180mins, Time Based Arts, Amsterdam 1988.

Acconci, Vito. The Red Tapes. b&w. 140mins, 1976.

Beuys, Joseph. Social Sculpture. Film, Lutz Mommartz b&w: 11mins, 1969.

Morris, Robert. Gas Station. 16mm Film silent, colour: 33min, 1969.

Morris, Robert. Wisconsin. 16mm Film silent b&w 14mins, 1970.

Morris, Robert. Neo-Classic. 16mm Film silent, b&w: 14mins, 1971.

Schellman, J. and Kluser. Celtic and ~. [performance of "'Celtic' (Kinloch Rannoch), Scottish Symphony" in Basel, 1971] b&w: 25mins, 1971.

Wilson, Robert. Deafman Glance. (not commercially available).

Wilson, Robert. A Letter for Queen Victoria. (not commercially available).

Wilson, Robert. Einstein on the Beach. (not commercially available) .

## UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Acconci, Vito. Trademarks [score]. Notes on Performance New York September 1970.

Acconci, Vito. Room Situation (Proximity). unpublished notes on performance New York 1970.

Acconci, Vito. Blindfolded Catching Piece. unpublished notes on film New York 1970.

Acconci, Vito. Service Area. notes on performance New York 1970.

Kaye, Nick. "The Fine Artist's use of theatre form since 1945." Dissertation., 1985.

Kaye, Nick. Thinking Postmodernisms: A review of T. Docherty "After Theory: Post-Modernism/Post-Marxism" and F. Jameson "Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. unpublished 1991.

Leschig, Gregor. "Interview - Robert Wilson--Gregor Leschig" Marranca, Bonnie. [notes for intro to Theatre of Images on Wilson].

White, Tim. Interview with Robert Wilson.

White, Tim. Interview with Robert Morris.

### OTHER MATERIALS

Anon. Lighting script for Iowa production of Deafman Glance.

Anon. Technical requirements for Deafman Glance.

Anon. Deafman Glance role assignment.

Columbia University. Finder for Robert Wilson Collection. 1992.

Intermedia Artists Corporation. Intermedia Artists Corporation. unknown.

Lincoln Centre. [Bibliography of material]. 1992.

Museum of Modern Art. [Finder for Information Exhibition papers]. New York 1992.

Nelson, Rick. [production notes for Deafman Glance].

Wilson, Robert. Iowa City Notes [from BAM program for Deafman].

Wilson, Robert. preliminary notes for the introduction to Marranca, Bonnie The Theatre of Images Drama Book Specialists New York 1977.

Wilson, Robert. [sketches for Hamletmachine].

Wilson, Robert. [preliminary notes for Marranca book introduction].

Wilson, Robert. [notes on QV introducing Einstein].

Wilson, Robert. [EOB script - Act 1].